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FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

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***OTHERS IN PREPARATION.***

# FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM TAYLOR,

WINDERMERE,

*Professor of Theology in the Evangelical Union Theological Hall,  
Glasgow.*



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“ I stand ready to confess to the forementioned Divines, if they can maintain their peculiar notion of freedom, consisting in the self-determining power of the will as necessary to moral agency, and can thoroughly establish it in opposition to the arguments lying against it, then they have an impregnable castle, to which they may repair, and remain invincible, in all the controversies they have with the Reformed Divines concerning original sin, the sovereignty of grace, election, redemption, conversion, the efficacious operation of the Holy Spirit, the nature of saving faith, perseverance of the saints, and other principles of the like kind.”—EDWARDS, *On Original Sin*, Part IV., chap. i.

## P R E F A C E.

---

AMID the manifold discussions already existing concerning the Freedom of the human Will, this contribution to the controversy may be regarded by many as altogether unnecessary and vain. Still, the questions involved are of perennial interest, and also of decisive importance in all scientific, moral, and theological thought; and, therefore, demand renewed consideration. Between the Theistic and the non-Theistic Scientist, with their widely different theoretic philosophies of the universe, the generic point of divergence is found in the mind of man as free, or not free from an absolute necessitation in thought, feeling, and volition. For if there is no freedom in the mind of man, there is no freedom of mind in the universe,—no God, rationally conceivable. Freedom of Will as a fact in man is the only rational basis on which the Theistic interpretation of the universe is possible. The conception of God as the Personal, and Free, First Cause, determinating movements for an end, is the rational implicate of the consciousness of the fact in man that he himself is a personal, free, first cause of certain movements for given ends. Apart from this fact in man's consciousness, the conception of God swims in the air, a baseless imagination. Therefore, the great question between the Theologian and all Materialists and non-Theistic Scientists, resolves itself ultimately into this,—is the mind of man, as we know it in man, free or not free, at least in some respects, from absolute necessitation? For a free, personal man, and the Free, Personal God, stand or fall together in rational thought.

As between Theologians themselves, their doctrinal conceptions of God, and their principles of Divine moral government, are theoretically determined, as the great Edwards clearly saw, by their doctrine of the human Will. The distinctive Calvinian dogmas concerning God and His moral, and Christian governments, are based on the human Will as determinated absolutely in all its choices according to the Divine decree which fore-ordains all events material and spiritual. But if man's will is free, and is not causally determined, then the whole conception is changed, and the distinctive doctrines of the Calvinian system are convicted of gravest error.

President Edwards wrote his celebrated *Inquiry* as the philosophical defence of the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism; in defence of Human Freedom this volume has been written. The principal arguments of President Edwards have been followed; partly because they are extensively supposed to be, if not unanswerable, at least as yet unanswered, and partly because he has raised the questions of chief interest and decisive importance to Theologians in their respective doctrinal systems.

Those who wish to see a more extended examination of the Necessitarian theory, and one of the ablest defences of Human Freedom, may consult H. P. Tappan's *Treatise on the Will*. To Dr. Tappan this writer expresses his heartfelt obligations for having been delivered in early life from the perplexities and moral chaos in which he was involved by the work of Edwards.

With some fears and hesitations, is this little book sent forth. But such as it is, let it go, and speak as it best can for Human Freedom and for God.

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# FREEDOM OF THE WILL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.—THE TERMS LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

THE terms liberty and necessity cannot be applied to the same thing in the same respect. Where the one is, the other is not. If, in different respects, both co-exist in the same thing, they mutually condition each other; so that neither of them is absolute and universal, but is only relative and limited in its signification.

The term liberty is equal to "*may be*," and always contains a *plural* possibility. But the term necessity is equal to "*must be*," and always contains only a *singular* possibility. When this liberty of "*may be*," and this necessity of "*must be*," are affirmed or denied of the will, it must be carefully borne in mind that they have to do neither with,—

(1.) The necessities involved in primary

knowledges, whether perceptions, intuitions, or judgments;

(2.) Nor with the necessities involved in logical judgments, and constituted wholes of thought;

(3.) Nor with necessities involved in wholes and their parts in the nature of things;

(4.) Nor with the necessities involved in moral imperatives and judgments;

(5.) Nor with necessities involved in the generic feelings of pain and pleasure excited by objects present in thought.

All these are necessities realised in human thought and feeling. Arising and abiding in consciousness, according to the laws of our constitution, they exclude all freedom to think and feel differently. While these necessities of thought and feeling are not only conceded, but are also regarded as the basis of all rational freedom; they yet leave the liberty or necessity of the will wholly untouched.

For the present, then, we use the term will as denoting the cause of choice, or volition. The great question which we have to consider in the present undertaking, is briefly this:—Is the human will necessitated, or is it free, to choose or not to choose? When all things requisite to choosing are present, is the will the free, or

the necessitated cause of the resultant choice? Further, all things requisite to choice being present and remaining as they are, is each choice of the will the only *one* possible?—the unit of possibility contained in "*must be*;" or is each choice of the will only *one* out of the plurality of possibilities contained in "*may be*?" It is self-evident, therefore, that the will, taken as cause of volitions, must either originate its choices in and by itself, and so be their proper cause, free from causal, necessitating antecedents; or it is caused in its choices, and only transmits antecedent forces, like the wheels of the locomotive engine communicating to all the wheels of the attached carriages the primary force of the steam.

From very different standpoints, the alternatives of liberty or necessity in the choices of the will, have presented themselves to the most thoughtful men in all ages. From Atheistic theories concerning the eternity of the universe and its persistent force and evolutions; or from Pantheistic interpretations of the great whole of things; or from Theistic conceptions of the supremacy of one personal Divine will, ordering, fixing, and ruling over all, many of the best of men, both Pagan and Christian, have resolutely affirmed that



the will of man must choose as it does, and not otherwise. They affirm that the will, in common with all other things, must act according to the necessary and necessitating causal nexus in the very nature of things. According to these views, the will never has, never can have, more within its choice than the minimum possible—the unit of possibility. While the antecedents and environments of the will remain the same, it must choose as it does, and not otherwise.

But many, on the contrary, have asserted that the will is exempt from necessitation, and is free to choose or not, or, in some respects, to choose otherwise than it does. With this view we agree, and it will be our aim in the following pages to show that the will is a proper cause originating its own acts, conditioned, it is true, but not causally necessitated by its antecedents and environments. For while, in many respects, man is subject to necessity, yet his will is free, giving him his freedom as a moral agent and a unique position on earth as the subject of moral government. The affirmation of this liberty of the will, as the proper cause of its choices, exempt from necessitation from within or from without, we hold to be the only rational ground

on which the responsibility of man and the moral government of God can be based, and can be in these days successfully defended.

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## CHAPTER II.

### CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS PHENOMENA.

MERE assertions and theories concerning liberty and necessity in relation to the will prove nothing. They require evidence to prove their validity or invalidity. Whence may we derive the evidence adequate to decide the questions in dispute? The highest, and indeed, final appeal, must be made to consciousness, and all disputes must be settled according to its evidence. The liberty or necessity of the will resolves itself into a question of what exists in consciousness as simple fact, and, therefore, by its testimony everything ought to be tested.

In all cases the nature of the subject determines the nature and sources of evidence. History requires documentary and traditional evidence. Each separate science, and all its classifications and principles, are built up

out of, and tested by simple, yet carefully ascertained facts. These facts once clearly found cannot be set aside, or their evidence be invalidated, by any other fact or inference whatsoever. So it is in questions concerning the freedom of the will. What does consciousness say on the fact? If we find in ourselves the fact of freedom, then the fact of it is the only, just because it is the highest, proof of it. As against this fact of freedom manifested within us, no evidences from external sources are valid. These can speak only for the external facts to which they relate; but cannot enter the home of the soul, and declare that the soul is uttering falsehood to itself. For the same reason, no inferences, no analogies derived from external phenomena can overthrow, or in the least invalidate the direct, simple utterances of the self-conscious mind. Whatever may be the discrepancies apparent between the external and the internal, each is veracious in its own sphere, and its evidence supreme relative to its own class of facts.

Indeed, evidence of consciousness is the highest and most valid. Whatever else may be doubted, this cannot; for consciousness is simply immediate self-knowledge, enabling each man to say, "I know that I know." But

this knowledge is, in fact, primarily a knowledge of self and its modifications. These knowledges are direct and immediate, can neither be doubted nor rejected, but constitute the data assumed in all constructive rational thought.

But in many directions at the present time there is a strong tendency to regard the exactly observed phenomena of the external world as possessing the highest possible authority. Many are, therefore, disposed to interpret mind and its phenomena in terms of matter, motion, and force. Since they find in matter and motion a necessary, necessitated, and unbroken series of antecedents and consequents according to a manifold continuity of force, they infer, by analogy, that the antecedents and consequents in consciousness are also, without exception, necessary and necessitated; so that the idea of freedom is fallacious—a false impression, not a simple fact directly known.

Instead, however, of following such a method, regarding it as the very reverse of the correct one, we must start in our inquiries concerning the will from within, and in terms of self-consciousness interpret the external spheres of matter, motion, and force. We

must do so, because we know and can know nothing of matter, motion, and force outside, till consciousness first speaks inside. It is only what it says inside which we believe exists outside. Consciousness says nothing of external things which have never been announced within it as primary modifications of self. Our certainty, therefore, concerning external facts rests on our certainty of the internal facts presented in consciousness of self-modifications. These are to us the primary, undeniable certainties. Deny these, or override them with external facts and analogies, and we, in fact, set aside all certainty of knowledge in all spheres of thought. The supreme, ultimate test of all fact, truth, principle, law, must be the primary announcements of consciousness. If it is mendacious, the root of our intelligent nature is a lie, and every man becomes an organised deceiver both of himself and of others. By an original necessity of nature we first of all believe, not our own eyes, and ears, and hands, for they may deceive us, and sometimes do; but our own consciousness, with its primary deliverances regarding self and its modifications. We shall never have a true science and philosophy of the external world—matter, motion, and force,

till we have a true science and philosophy of the internal world—mind and self-consciousness.

It is assumed here, and throughout this discussion, that mind, with its distinctive phenomenon — self-consciousness — is a substance distinct from carbon, oxygen, &c. The scientist properly says that carbon and oxygen are distinct simple substances, because they have qualities which differentiate them from all others, and which they retain into whatever combinations they enter, and which re-appear unchanged whenever the compounds of which they are constituents become resolved. So, for like reasons, we say that mind, soul, or spirit is a distinct substance, having as its differentiating quality self-consciousness, which it retains while entering into certain relations or combinations with organised matter, and which may, therefore, reappear unchanged, even when the present material organism is dissolved, and may manifest its differential quality of self-consciousness under new conditions, combinations, or environments. But what mind is at first it is all through—self-conscious, and like any other substance will always manifest its properties when the proper conditions are supplied. In itself, as the knower

of itself, the mind will ever find the highest possible certainty as to itself and its operations. What, then, is the testimony which this self-conscious mind, soul, or spirit gives concerning its own freedom?

Taking a general comprehensive view of consciousness it contains, as its generic phenomenon, the knowledge of Self as modified by a Not-Self. . I know myself only as discriminated from a something not myself. This antithesis of Self and Not-Self underlies all the phenomena or modifications of consciousness. When, however, we take into view the manifold and varied phenomena or modifications of consciousness, we find that they may be arranged into three great classes:—(1.) Knowledges; (2.) Feelings; (3.) Volitions. Corresponding to this classification of mental phenomena, we find that the powers or energies of the mind itself may also be classified:—(1.) The Intellect, or the faculty of knowing; (2.) the Sensibility or heart, as the capacity of feeling pain or pleasure; (3.) the Will, as the power of volition or choosing.

According to the old scholastic distribution of mental phenomena and mental powers, it was customary to speak of the powers of the understanding, and the powers of the will, or,

as it is otherwise expressed, into intellectual and active powers. Dr. Reid, as is well known, adopted this classification in his great Work. But since the time of Kant, the threefold division above given is all but universally adopted.

Let it, however, be carefully remembered, both now and throughout the whole of these discussions, that this threefold division of mental powers with their respective phenomena is only a formal and logical distinction, and does not imply that these are distinct entities in the mind, distinct at once from each other and the mind itself, or that they operate in a discrete manner. In speaking of mental faculties, capacities, or powers, we are simply employing specific names for distinct energies, of which the one indivisible mind is the common cause. The faculty of knowledge or intelligence, the capacity of feeling or sensibility, the power of volition or will, are energies of one and the same self-conscious mind, as the cause or source of all these modifications or phenomena. For analytic and synthetic purposes of thought, we discriminate one class of phenomena from another, one kind of mental operation from another, and refer them all to different mental capa-



bilities. They are all, however, in one and the selfsame mind, and, being co-ordinate, condition each other in all concrete operations. This great complexus of experience we analyse into its parts for the sake of scientific clearness and accurate exposition. In speaking of the intelligence, the sensibility, and the will as distinguished from each other, we must not think of them as separate entities with dislocated energies and phenomena; but think of them as co-existing in the one indivisible self-conscious soul, mutually co-operating in every rational exercise of thought, feeling, and volition.<sup>1</sup>

Now to return to the threefold classification of mental powers and their respective phenomena, let us look at the distinctive characteristics of each:—(1.) The Intelligence, or thought-faculty, and its knowledges of all kinds. In its primary and formal operations it is determinated, has no freedom, but acts necessarily. In perceptions of external objects, in intuitions, *a priori* judgments, logical judgments, &c., it is determinated in all its operations, and works according to the necessary laws of its constitution thus, and not other-

<sup>1</sup> See Sir W. Hamilton's *Metaphysics*, Lect. xi. and xx.

wise. On this account, Tappan and others speak of the intelligence as passive, seeing it possesses no freedom to act otherwise than it does. With deference to all such thinkers, we regard the term *passive* as inappropriate. Passivity does not properly describe the operations of the intelligence. There is so much energy, action, and result in the intellectual sphere, that it seems anything but passive. There is action, great and various; but it is determinated, necessitated to be what it is, and not otherwise, by the objects with which it deals. There is no freedom, but only *determinated activity*. The intelligence, as the faculty of knowledge, is an open eye gazing out upon the universe, beholding its myriad facts, ascertaining its admirable methods, and discerning its all-embracing principles. As a photographic plate, well prepared, it receives the images, ideas, of all objects, material and spiritual, as the light shining upon it presents them. As a self-conscious mirror it at once knows itself and the objects presented within it. Thus it is that the universe, *as thing known*, conditions, and so determinates the mind, *as thing knowing*. By its unceasing, but determinated activities, the intelligence, with the highest certainty possible, supplies

all knowledges, reasons, means, and ends requisite to rational action.

- (2.) The Sensibility, or capacity of feeling, with its emotions of desires and aversions, loves and hatreds, pains and pleasures. This mental energy has often been described as a *passive power*—a mere capacity of being affected by objects. Yet this does not seem to be properly descriptive of that element in our nature which, in the presence of certain objects, produces such tumults and urgencies of soul. We greatly prefer the term *determined or necessitated capacity or power*, as applied to our emotional nature. For in its primary and formal modifications this capacity of
- feeling has no freedom, but ever works according to the necessary laws of its constitution as it does, and not otherwise. Determinated activity in all directions, not freedom, distinguishes this energy of the mind; for as is the nature of the objects present in thought, so are the emotions excited in the sensibility. This capacity specially gives us things strictly subjective, mere self-modifications. It reveals how *we feel*, and presents the effects which our knowledges produce within us, whether painful or pleasant. It declares the relation which the things known

sustain to the well-being or otherwise of him who knows. In it we find the good or the evil to us, the "*summum bonum*" or the "*summum malum*." This capacity, necessarily determinated in its operations, supplies us with all those desires and aversions, loves and hatreds, hopes and fears, which form the urgencies, impulses, motives, or inducements to act, either to resist the painful, or to attain the pleasant. This sensitive heart of man stands open to the great universe, that all persons and things may enter and declare their qualities as useful or hurtful, as hateful or lovable. It is a lyre of myriad chords, struck by fingers visible and invisible, sending forth its notes of joy or sorrow, of hope or fear, and stirring all our energies to unceasing action.

(3.) The Will, or power of volition. This will-power is the mental energy which produces or causes all choices, volitions, properly so called. Its phenomena are neither knowledges nor emotions, neither reasons nor motives, but are *actions* of the mind. They are contributions of the will in the form of something done. The intelligence, sensibility, and external world furnish the conditions; but the will originates or causes the choice, volitions, or acts of the mind.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE WILL AND ITS ACTS.

It has been conceded that the intelligence and sensibility are necessitated or determinated to act as they do, and not otherwise. The great question before us now is, Whether the will is distinct from the other two mental energies, and whether the will in the production of its phenomena is determinated? On the affirmation or denial which is given to that question, liberty, human responsibility, and divine moral government stand or fall. It is therefore necessary that we define more precisely what is meant by the will and its acts. As already stated, till somewhat recently the term will was used as denoting the capacity of feeling in general, the power which gives an emotional response to what seems good or evil, as well as chooses or wills.

It is true that Necessitarians in defining the meaning of the term will as a mental power, have done it with great accuracy. They speak of the will as the principle or

faculty of willing, or of acting from choice. The great President Edwards thus expresses it: "The will, without any metaphysical refining, is plainly *that by which the mind chooses any thing*. The faculty of the will is that faculty or power or principle of mind by which it is capable of choosing." So far, there is no ground of objection. The act, operation, or function of the will is here described as choosing. But what is this choosing, act of choosing, or choice? Necessitarians, in one way or another, confound or identify choice with emotional states in general, and thereby confound or identify the will with the sensibility. As the acknowledged and justly honoured leader of theological Necessitarians in modern times, and regarded by them as not only unanswered, but also unanswerable, Edwards shall speak for himself:—"Whatever names we call the act of the will by, choosing, refusing, approving, disapproving, liking, disliking, embracing, rejecting, determining, directing, commanding, forbidding, inclining or being averse, or being pleased or displeased with, all may be reduced to this of *choosing*." He rejects Locke's distinction between will and desire and preference, and comes to the conclusion that it does not appear "that there is any difference

between *volition* and *preference*, or that a man's choosing, liking best, being best pleased with a thing, are not the same with his willing that thing." Further, he says,—“A man doing as he *wills*, and doing as he *pleases*, are the same thing in common speech.”<sup>1</sup>

This view of the acts of the will, as consisting of mere likes and dislikes, desires and aversions, promoted to the dignity of choosing or choice, we regard as the fundamental falsity of the Necessitarian theory. On this false foundation Edwards constructs his logical edifice, so massive in appearance and so admired, and esteemed as impregnable; but, if we can successfully assail this foundation the firmly clamped structure will fall. The falseness of the Necessitarian definitions of the acts of the will may appear from two considerations,—

(1.) That the acts of the will are equal to desires and aversions or preferences, is false in fact and in terms. . . Locke's keen eye saw that neither the term desire nor preference exactly expressed the same idea as the term choice, though he seems puzzled to know what to make of choice. Desires and choices are not words which can be used interchangeably.

<sup>1</sup> *Inquiry into the Freedom of the Will*, Part I., § 1.

It may, indeed, be foolish, yet I may say that I desire to visit the moon; but it would be absurd to say, I choose to do so. Desire in its range is unlimited, but choice is bounded by the present possible. Moreover, as a matter of fact, we can desire only the agreeable or pleasant, and we can desire most, only the most agreeable. This, however, denotes a fact in our capacity of feeling, determinated by the good in the object discerned. But we can, and sometimes do, choose the most disagreeable, and of choice reject the most agreeable to our conscious feeling. That man does so who chooses to walk from his cell to the place of execution. It is a misuse of words to say that his choice to walk thither is the most agreeable as felt by him, or what he likes best, or desires most. The drunkard choosing to abstain from the enticing cup, does not find that his choice and his desire run on the same lines, or that his volition and his liking best are the same. In both cases the choices may be according to what the unhappy men know to be wisest and best in the circumstances, but that at once removes the choice and its reasons from the sphere of feeling.

The same objection holds good against the



term "*preference*" as being equal to choice, though Locke thought it was upon the whole the best equivalent. Neither an intellectual nor an emotional preference is in common speech equal to a choice, or act of will. As experience testifies, choices often negative and set aside preferences both in thought and in feeling. Sometimes the term preference may be used as the equivalent of choice. But its elasticity of meaning is such, that its use in denoting a choice, or act of the will, leads to ambiguity, and therefore it ought not to be employed as the verbal equivalent of volition or choice. Locke himself acknowledges this, and gives a very useful caution, when he says—"Though I have above, endeavoured to express the act of volition by 'choosing, preferring,' and the like terms, that signify desire as well as volition, for want of other words to mark that act of the mind whose proper name is 'willing' or 'volition;' yet it being a very simple act, whosoever desires to understand what it is, will better find it by reflecting on his own mind, and observing what it does when it wills, than by any variety of articulate sounds whatsoever. This caution of being careful not to be misled by expressions that do not enough keep up the difference between

the will and several acts of the mind that are quite distinct from it, I think the more necessary, because I find the will often confounded with several of the affections, especially desire, and one put for the other."<sup>1</sup> We contend that this confusion exists when we use desire or preference as the verbal equivalents of choice or volition, as the act of the will. The fact in consciousness is distinct, and requires a distinct term to denote it. But to this we shall immediately return.

(2.) That the acts of the will, as acts of choice, are equal to desires, aversions, or preferences, is false in psychology. This account of the nature of choice as an act of the will, is based on the classification of mental powers formerly given, according to which the understanding and the will were the only two powers or faculties. To the one all perceptions and judgments, and to the other all affections, feelings, and choices, respectively belonged. Emotional states, such as desires, aversions, uneasiness, preferences, as well as choices were ascribed. Hence choices were the same, or, at least, of the same order, as the other emotional affections. This false psychology gave birth of necessity to a false

<sup>1</sup> *Understanding*, B. II., ch. xxi, § 30.

use of terms, and consequent confusion of thought, from which even the great Locke himself did not altogether escape. It completely took possession of Edwards, as is seen in his celebrated axiom,—“A man doing as he *wills*, and doing as he *pleases*, are the same thing.” But the modern, and, as we think, correct classification of mental powers and their phenomena, overthrows the false psychology on which all Necessitarian theories have been based.

Hence the importance of the threefold classification of mental powers and their phenomena. This classification of mental powers and their respective phenomena, may be seen at a glance from the testimony of consciousness.

(a.) When I say “I know,” all understand me to mean that certain things present themselves to me with their qualities as objects of my thought. There they are, it may be, without any control of mine, revealing, manifesting, or announcing themselves to me, and become things known. Nor do I find any direct power in me to alter, or in any way change these announcements. That garden with its familiar trees, specially that weeping ash in its centre, has announced itself to me

for many years whenever I have looked out of my window. But just now, by visual perception, I know that my little dog, with its snow-white body, black erect ears, is pursuing in the garden a vagrant cat, and is evidently bent on the expulsion of the intruder. But now the cat has taken its stand, with arched back, every hair erect on its resolute tail. Awed by these resistant feline attitudes, the faithful dog now stands on three legs, the left foreleg uplifted, ready for the attack, the tail meanwhile wonderfully expressive as it liberates surplus energy. I know all that. I am conscious of that information and excitement of thought by these animals and their quarrels. I am a recipient spectator, or knower of these external facts. The same is true of all external phenomena, announcing themselves to me through the various senses, exciting knowledge within me, which I have no direct power of modifying. My thought is determinated by its object, and is simply its subjective correlate.

If the objects known are those of consciousness, I know them in the same manner. The subjective objects present or reveal themselves to me, and I know them as this thought, or that feeling, or that volition, and have no direct

power to change the fact announced, or the judgment affirmed in consciousness. It may be what is called a first principle, or an *a priori* judgment, or a conclusion from admitted premises properly inferred. In all such cases I know the facts, the *a priori* judgments, and the logical inferences, as in me. I cannot change them, or think them to be different, or non-existent. They are to me necessarily determined to be as they are, and not otherwise. Thus all our knowledges and thought operations are primarily and intrinsically announcements, revelations of objects in consciousness, often coming unbidden, often mysterious as to their entrance into and exit from the theatre of consciousness. But in whatever form they come or go, as knowledges or thought operations of the intelligence, they have differentia rendering them perfectly distinct from all other mental modifications.

(b.) When I say "*I feel*," every one understands me to mean that certain states, pleasant or painful, are produced in consciousness. When objects have announced their qualities in my intelligence, they excite that energy of my nature, the phenomena of which, as distinguished from sensations, are emotions, joy or sorrow, love or hatred, desire or aversion.

These feelings, as modifications of the sensibility, are determinated by the objects presented in thought, and come or go as their objects are present or absent in the intelligence. There is no immediate control over their entrance into or exit from the sensibility.

(c.) But when I say "*I will*," no one ever thinks of me as simply receiving information from without, or announcements from within, or having a certain feeling, painful or pleasant, such as sorrow or joy. By every one I am understood to mean that *I do* something relative to myself, or the objects known and felt by me. The phrase "*I will*" denotes a thing done by me, an action by me, relative either to myself or my environments. The function therefore of this "*I*" or self energy, or will-power, is neither to supply the phenomena of knowledge, nor the phenomena of feeling, but is simply that element in the mind which contributes personal actions, the third great class of phenomena.

The question at present is not whether the will is free, or, like the other two mental energies, is determinated to act as it does. Our inquiry is, what is the nature of acts of will, no matter how it comes to produce them? As the mental energy which produces personal

actions, the *will* declares itself in the verb "I will," or in the noun "*volition*." But as this "*I will*," or volition, in nearly all cases is selective, one definite act out of a plurality equally possible, it is a chosen act, or an act of choice. Acts of will chosen from others equally possible, are determinated in one direction. Notwithstanding the confusion into which Locke fell, as to the necessity of each act of will, it is self-evident that the only necessity in the case is that everything is what it is, and not another. Accordingly each act of the will is an act chosen as one out of the two or more possible, and, therefore, has choice as an essential element of its nature. We hence conclude, that for the will-power, or self-energy, *to will, to choose, or to do is the same as to act electively.*

The objects on which acts of will terminate and determine are either subjective or objective. The objects are subjective when our acts of will terminate on and determine the intelligence in its thought-processes, originating, continuing, or suspending them, producing the well-known phenomena of attention or non-attention. The objects of the acts of will are also subjective when they terminate on the sensibility and its states of feeling, and

by certain means originate, continue, or expel given emotions. Further, the future acts of the will itself are another class of subjective objects to present acts, such as purposes or decrees relating to the future conduct of ourselves or others.

The objects of acts of will are objective when they terminate on the movements of our own material organism, and through it on the outer world in general. In both the subjective and objective objects of volition, acts of will are elective acts of the personal energy, limiting, fixing, determining, and variously controlling the applications, uses, and ends of thought-processes, emotional states, energies lodged in the organism, and, to some extent, the forces of the outer world itself.

Contrast this self-energy in its imperial acts of control and determination of mental and bodily movements, with what are called the involuntary phenomena of mind and body, and we at once see the difference. When the will does not contribute its executive actions, beginning, continuing, accelerating, or retarding, and generally guiding mental and physical movements, we may have dreams, or madness in the mind, or St. Vitus's dance in the body. This self-energy, the will, in its



elective action, is essential to self-government and rational conduct.

It is this self-energy called will, the controller of the movements of mind and body, which the Necessitarian theory in reality sets aside in its false definition of the nature of its acts. That theory, in one form or another, as we shall see immediately, confounds acts of will with emotions of desire or aversion in the sensibility, and so renders these acts determinated by the objects present in thought. But this brings us to the great question—what determines the will?

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## CHAPTER IV.

### THE DETERMINATION OF THE WILL IN ITS CHOICES.

Is the will, or the mind itself exerting its energy called will, free to act, or not to act, or, in some respects, to act otherwise than it does? Or is the will, in common with material causes, always determinated to act as it does and not otherwise? That is the great ques-

tion in this celebrated controversy. But mark well the real terms of the question. The question is not, is the will free to act *as it chooses*, or *as it pleases*? This is to make the will *acting* something different from the will *choosing*, so that the choosing or pleasing becomes the rule of the acting. That is not the question, however. Our question is the direct one, is the will free in its acts of choosing, or is it determinated in its acts of choice by something antecedent in the organism and its environments, or in the mind itself? There is, of course, a determination of the will in all its acts of choosing; but whence is it? Is it from the will itself, or from something external to it? In everything which can be regarded as a cause at all, there is some one determinated act producing some one particular effect. But whence is this particular limiting, fixing of the causal energy in that one direction, rather than in others? Only two answers are possible: either the determination of the cause is from a *necessity* inherent in its own nature, or from a *freedom of choice* inherent in its nature. This gives us at once, as the only possible alternatives in the case before us, either the will is determinated by the necessity inherent in its nature, or it

determines its acts according to the freedom inherent in its nature. Those who take the former are Necessitarians, and those who take the latter are Libertarians.

The determination of the will has been accounted for by various theories.

*The Physical or Dynamic Theory.*

Some modern advocates of this theory boldly undertake to interpret all phenomena, mental, moral, spiritual, as well as physical, in terms of matter, motion, and force. With a post-prophetic vision piercing across the abysmal past, the physical scientist beholds in matter "the promise and the potency of all forms of terrestrial life." Possibly as he first sees it, this matter with its wonderful promise and potency is a very nebulous gas, just such a dance of atoms as would have delighted Democritus to behold. This matter, however, has force or energy inherent in it, which is a constant sum, though wonderfully transformed in quantitative equivalents. This force persists without breach of continuity, by methods of evolution, accidental variations, and laws of heredity, from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. Accordingly, as the most complex and highly organised struc-

ture, man, in his body, and in his intellectual and moral nature, is determinated to be as he is by the ancestral series which has without breach of continuity evolved him. Dr. Tyndall assured his Birmingham audience that there was a time when man's "ancestors could not be called human." The man of to-day is a final product from the interaction of organisms and their environments through the countless ages past. Man's physical and intellectual textures have alike been woven for him by molecular motions in the organism and nervous apparatus. For, as Huxley says, "the feeling we call volition is not the cause of a voluntary act, but the symbol of that state of the brain which is the immediate cause of that act." Thus our feeling or consciousness of volition is only a mere symbol of a material modification in the molecules of the brain, occurring as determinate movements in the interaction of the organism and its environments—the latest products of an unbroken eternal series of determined molecules.

This physical or dynamic theory is exposed to fatal objections; it contradicts all the moral facts and judgments of the human race, and it ignores the facts of consciousness. First of all, moral facts and judgments are contradicted

by the theory. Even if the incalculable past ages have evolved the organism we proudly call man, we may postulate surely that, as the evolved product, he is at least self-consistent, and that one set of facts in him shall not contradict another, and that one part of the organism man shall not deceive the other parts. Nature, we are assured, is true and honest, and works with facts, not with delusions. But as true and honest in man, what does nature say on the moral facts and judgments of mankind? The ideas of right and wrong, the *imperative felt in "I ought,"* the praise or blame due to a right or wrong act, not measured by the benefit or injury of its consequences, what are these?

Are they facts or fictions? They are fictions if, as the theory asserts, moral worth or demerit exist in man no otherwise than in salubrious or pestilent air, in useful or in injurious animals. No one is more worthy to represent this theory than Dr. Tyndall. In his Birmingham address, having stated his theory of man's nature and actions, he supposes a so-called criminal finding an excuse for his conduct in what had been said:—"If," says the robber, the ravisher, and the murderer, "I act because I must act; what right have

you to hold me responsible for my deed?" The reply is, "The right of society to protect itself against aggressive and injurious forces, whether they be bond or free, forces of nature or forces of man." Mark the identity of "forces of nature or forces of man" in this matter of responsibility. He proceeds: "Then," retorts the criminal, "you punish me for what I cannot help." "Granted," says society. He then says: "Let us reason the matter fully and fairly out. We entertain no malice or hatred against you; but simply with a view to our own safety and purification, we are determined that you and such as you shall not enjoy liberty of evil actions in our midst. You who have behaved as a wild beast, we claim the right to cage or kill as we should a wild beast. . . . Observe, finally, the consistency of our conduct; you offend, because you cannot help offending, to the public detriment. We punish, because we cannot help punishing, for the public good."

This, no doubt, flows consistently from the position laid down in the lecture, that our favoured organisms with their garnered excellencies, capacities, and tendencies have emerged from ancestors not human, according to laws of accidental variation and heredity. We were

not consulted, and have not been masters of the circumstances which determined our organisms and their present motives and wishes now passing forth into actions. "If," says Dr. Tyndall, "our motives and wishes determine our actions, in what sense can these actions be the results of free will?" Yes; or in what sense can any man be responsible for them?

If this theory is true, man's true and proper responsibility, all moral facts and judgments, are delusions and not realities. The inherent eternal right or wrong of human conduct is only fictitious dogma. The only right is found in the survival of the fittest—*i.e.*, the strongest, the most cunning. It is all very well when we (Society in Great Britain) claim the right to hang for the public good the robber, the ravisher, and the murderer, because of his detriment to the public good. But, suppose that we are a society of banditti, with a good deal of our ancestors not human in us, not masters of the circumstances in which our motives and wishes originate, and our actions not the results of our free will, and suppose that we should, for the public good of our society, claim the right to rob him who keeps his property for his own use, to ravish the

chaste woman who has preserved her womanhood, and, in general, to kill, as we should a wild beast, every man who conducted himself honestly, chastely, benevolently to our public detriment. What has the advocates of this theory to say to the society with molecules like that? They cannot speak of right and wrong as essential and eternal, having an absolute imperative—thou shalt not perpetrate such wickedness. For might is the only right, and morality is only the molecular equivalent of the present greatest enjoyment or good of those having the greatest brute forces. These are the forces which have woven "the triplex web of man's physical, intellectual, and moral nature," and are sure to be effectual to the end. It is no wonder that this theory finds our normal moral nature and moral code in the animal struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest in the strongest.

The theory is therefore repugnant to the veracity and validity of man's sense of responsibility, and the moral judgments of the race, and as such must be rejected as hostile to the greatest and most solemn facts known to man. This theory utterly fails to account for the moral facts of human con-



sciousness and human governments, and is therefore false.

This mechanical or dynamic theory is also contradicted by the facts of consciousness itself. It explains man's conduct without reference to consciousness as a distinct factor in the case. We are indebted to Dr. Tyndall for his clear and honest statement of the theory in his Birmingham address, and I do not suppose that his positions will be disputed by those who interpret mind and its phenomena in terms of matter. The remarkable thing is, that his science of man excludes consciousness as a factor in human life, and confines us to physical phenomena. He asks, "What is the causal connection, if any, between the objective and subjective, between molecular motions and states of consciousness? My answer is, I know not, nor have I as yet met with anybody who knows." Granted, I say. But though we all confess ignorance of *how it is*, yet all know there is such a causal connection. This is stated very well by him,—consciousness "certainly does emerge; molecular motion produces consciousness." Wherein does "produces" differ from "causes." Well, there is a fact—molecular motion produces or causes consciousness; and whether we can fully

account for it or not, it is there, and must have its place in any true theory of man's life. We are, however, told,—“We are here, in fact, upon the boundary line of our intellectual powers, where the ordinary canons of sense fail to extricate us from our difficulties. If we are true to these canons, we must deny to subjective phenomena all influence on physical processes. The latter must be regarded as complete in themselves. Physical science offers no justification for the notion that molecules can be moved by states of consciousness; and it furnishes just as little countenance to the conclusion that states of consciousness can be generated by molecular motion.” Yet, “molecular motion produces consciousness.” Both cannot be true; but let this contradiction in terms pass. According to this, physical science cannot account for molecular motion being followed by consciousness, and consciousness in its turn being followed by molecular motion. Well, grant that: still consciousness with all its phenomena remains as great a fact as ever, and is not to be set aside because physical science and its canons cannot and does not account for it. On what we may call the entrance side of consciousness, we have a thrill in nerves of

sensation, which of course stops when the nerve ceases; then consciousness somehow emerges in something being known. There is the undeniable fact. On the exit side we have a consciousness of volition to lift the arm; then there is a nerve-thrill liberating energy in a muscular discharge, and mechanical motion of the organism emerges. However mysterious the nexus on the entrance or exit side of consciousness may be, it is a fact that from molecular motions, consciousness emerges in something being known; and it is also a fact that consciousness of volition so passes out into molecular motions, that there is a thing done in the organism and external world. In any other case, what would real science say if phenomena emerged and no known element or substance could account for them? It would say, there must be a new or undiscovered substance at work as the proper cause of these phenomena. If the phenomena escaped all physical tests—if the manifested qualities transcended all material formulæ, the true method of science would declare that a spiritual substance existed as the cause of such superphysical facts—say soul, or mind, or spirit. But what does Dr. Tyndall do with this consciousness which can neither be

moved by nor move molecules in the organism—this chasm—this solution of continuity. With admirable honesty Dr. Tyndall says, "Frankly stated we have here to deal with facts almost as difficult to be seized mentally as the idea of a soul. And if you are content to make your 'soul' a poetic rendering of a phenomenon which refuses the yoke of ordinary mechanical laws, I for one would not object to this exercise of ideality." Is it, then, in science a "poetic rendering," or "exercise of ideality," to say that every phenomenon must have a cause, and that every cause must be a substance exerting energy. If not, then how can the phenomena of consciousness, having a substance, soul, mind, and spirit, be poetic or ideal?

The simple fact is that human consciousness absolutely, even in the hand of the scientist, refuses to surrender to his canons of physical science and necessitated sequences, and makes good its claim as furnishing the facts and principles of a higher, because a mental science. In this system, consciousness is dropped out of human life, and is spoken of as only a mere "*by-product*," which mystifies and baffles the man of science, and "is unthinkable," and at best is a poetic

ideal. *It is a theory of man without a soul.*

Yet if consciousness is thus disposed of, and its facts set aside, where are the certainties of physical science to come from? If the veracity of our soul's consciousness of self is set aside, and its facts are ignored, whence does the scientist get his certainties of physical science? Is it not the case that all possible knowledge, within or without, is primarily a fact of consciousness? Accordingly, on this great question of freedom or necessitation in our acts of will, why go to antecedent or subsequent molecular motion in the brain, &c., instead of going at once to the direct fact of necessity or freedom in consciousness? The physical theory can only speak of the organism and its physiological conditions of thought, feeling, and will. We go behind all these into the self-revealments of consciousness. There and there only can we get a direct answer to our question, are we free to act, or not to act, or are we determined transmitters of antecedent forces? It is only by ignoring consciousness and its testimony to personal freedom, that this theory acquires its plausibility in reducing man to a mere problem in the science of

mechanics, and his whole life of thought, feeling, and will, to only a quantitative equivalent of the antecedent forces, which, in an unthinkable manner, emerges in consciousness. Thus, in its expositions of man and his mysterious life, by its own confessions, physical science must leave out the soul and its consciousness, and regard these grandest realities and primary certainties in thought as only a poetic rendering of phenomena in the "free exercise of ideality."

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE STRONGEST MOTIVE, OR PSYCHICAL THEORY.

By this I mean the theory which maintains that the will is determined by some antecedent state or condition of mind, which, as strongest motive, or moving reason, or impulse, causes the choice or act of will to be what it is, and not otherwise. All Necessitarians who regard the mind as a substance distinct from matter have in some form adopted this theory. They hold in common that the will is determined by something external to the will itself in antecedent states of mind. But what that

antecedent something is they differ concerning. Some give chief prominence to the intelligence, and say that the will is determined to act as it does by the last judgment of the practical intellect, or the last dictate of the understanding. But others give prominence to those feelings which are excited by the objects presented in the intelligence as at all events the immediate cause of choices or acts of will. Both views are in substance the same; for the intelligence with its presentations of facts, or by its judgments, determines the feelings, and the feelings determine the acts of will. The one is the remote, and the other is the immediate, determining cause of the choice or act of will. The latter since the time of Locke has been the most prevalent. He regarded "uneasiness" as that which "determines the will and sets us upon those actions which we perform." More fully he thus expresses himself,— "That which immediately determines the will, from time to time, to every voluntary act is the uneasiness of desire, fixed on some absent good, either negative, as indolency to one in pain, or positive, as enjoyment of pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

Edwards to a large extent follows Locke, and

<sup>1</sup> *Understanding*, B. II., ch. 21, § 33.

while including the opinion of Locke, develops with great power his theory of the strongest motive consisting in the most agreeable at present. For, as he says, it is the most agreeable to be relieved from uneasiness, so that in every case it is that which is the most agreeable at present which excites, incites, or moves the will to choose as it does, and not otherwise. In some sense, Edwards admits that the will follows the last dictate of the understanding, but it is only in so far as that last judgment is adapted to excite the most agreeable in the mind that it can be a motive. The most agreeable, or the greatest apparent good, at present is the immediate determining cause of each act of will. He says,—“Whatever is a motive in this sense, must be something that is extant in the view or apprehension of the understanding or perceiving faculty.” He further says, whatever “has the nature or influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or is viewed as *good*, . . . and, therefore, it must be true in some sense, that *the will always is as the greatest apparent good is.*” He explains this remarkable statement thus:—“I have rather chosen to express myself thus, that *the will always is as the greatest apparent good, or what appears most*



*agreeable is*, than to say that the will is *determined by* the greatest apparent good, or by *what seems* most agreeable, because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and choosing seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct."<sup>1</sup> Throughout this second section, Edwards makes it abundantly evident, that it is the good, pleasing, most agreeable emotions excited by objects extant in the view of the mind which determine the will, or rather are, in fact when strongest, the acts or choices of the will. Having regard, therefore, to the immediate determinants of choice, he finds them in the emotional states as these are excited by the objects viewed. The understanding lets these objects into the mind, and then motions and commotions of feeling are excited, and then the strongest and most vividly agreeable appear and determine the choices, or rather are the choices or acts of the will.

Edwards' idea seems much the same as that held by Leibnitz. In his annotations on King's *Origin of Evil*, No. 13, Leibnitz says that he does not think that the will always follows the judgment of the intelligence, but distinguishes between that judgment and the

<sup>1</sup> *In.*, Part I., § 2.

reasons influencing the will, and which arise from perceptions and inclinations not dependent on the senses. In his judgment the will always follows, whether distinct or confused, the most useful representations of good or evil resulting from reasons, passions, and inclinations. Even although it may also find reasons fitted to suspend its decision, yet the will always acts from the reasons which move it.

Whether by the last judgment of the understanding, by uneasiness, by the most agreeable exciting reasons, passions, and inclinations, the theory is alike in this, that the acts of will are determinated always through some antecedent state, condition, or operation of the mind, as a psychical force, or strongest motive, producing successively all acts or choices of the will. On this theory I will make the following brief remarks:—

(1.) This psychical or strongest motive theory is in principle identical with the physical or dynamic theory. The only difference is that this speaks in terms of mind, and that in terms of matter. The common term to both is *motive*, that which moves, or causes motion. In the theory before us, this term motive is transferred into psychology with its physical meaning and associations as denoting causal

force. The motive is the mental force, causing or determining the will to act as it does, just as the physical force causes, determines its effects. In principle it is all one, whether we speak of motive force in our material environments producing its effects upon our organism, and through that upon our consciousness, determining in series all our mental modifications; or of motive force in our consciousness producing thoughts, feelings, volitions in a necessitated series without breach of continuity. In the one case, we speak of motive force in terms of matter, in the other we speak of it in terms of mind; but in both, we alike speak of an unbroken series of causally necessitated antecedents and consequents.

(2.) This theory gives no freedom to the will, but only necessity and causal necessitation of the will in all its acts. It is determined by something antecedent which has the power to move or excite it to act as it does, and not otherwise, so that it is always determined by the strongest motive or mental force. The absolute necessity or causal necessitation involved in this idea may be easily seen if we only trace the order of sequence. To start with, our environments in the material world act upon our bodily organism, which causes certain sensations,

which cause certain perceptions, which cause certain judgments and knowledges, which cause certain feelings of pain or pleasure, and, therefore, desire or aversion, &c., which finally, as strongest motives, cause choice or acts of will. All this takes place according to the inherent nature and constitution of the mind and its material conditions. Each stage and step of the whole series is the necessary effect of the necessitating antecedent. Alike inside and outside the strongest force or motive prevails; so that the acts of will, as last in the series, and the action of the environments on the organism, as the first, are alike determinated to be as they are, and not otherwise.

It is in vain to say that the will or mind may suspend the judgment, or the strongest motive, and prevent acts of will; for even if such acts of suspension take place, they are, in terms of the theory, acts causally determinated by some judgment or motive stronger for delay than for despatch. There is no escape from the absolute necessity of a causally necessitated series of antecedents and consequents in the outer and inner spheres, and in both spheres without breach of continuity.

Nor does it avail anything to say that in choosing the will suffers no compulsion, no

coaction by the strongest motive; but acts freely, spontaneously under its motor stimulus. That is just to say that the will chooses, acts in that direction, because in terms of its very nature it can act in no other. For it is its nature to be determined to be as the most agreeable is. It goes in that direction without resistance being possible, or, if you please, spontaneously; but so does gunpowder or dynamite explode spontaneously under the motor force of fire. The fact is, that every substance exerts its peculiar energy under the proper causal force applied to it; so that the will, according to the theory before us, exerts its special energy as it does, simply because it is its nature to be always determined by the reasons, passions, uneasiness, or most agreeable, which constitute the strongest motive.

It hence follows that there is and can be no freedom of the will in choosing as it does. The question is not now concerning the will *doing* as it chooses or pleases, it is the ulterior question of the choosing itself, for the *doing* is only a sequent of the choice. In that choosing, the will is determined by antecedents which cause it to choose, and its choice as an effect can have no control over

that which causes it. That is self-evident. Its acts are voluntary only as they are acts of will, and not as they are acts of a free energy of mind, which, under the same circumstances, might have, and, indeed, in many cases *ought to have* been the very opposite.

Yet in direct contradiction of their own scheme of causal necessitation of the will in its choices by the strongest motive, whatever that may be, theological and ethical Necessitarians vigorously maintain man's freedom and responsibility, not only for his overt actions, but internal states of mind in general. While, all things being considered, it is impossible that any act of will should not have been, or have been otherwise; yet the man, in whom, as the arena, this battle of forces has taken place, and in whom the strongest always prevailed in determinating his choices and actions, is responsible for what has taken place in him as a helpless spectator. Yea, he is virtuous and praiseworthy, or criminal and worthy of blame, deserving of reward or punishment, for what has occurred within him without his control. As I said before, this theory is convicted of falsehood by the unanimous consent of all the moral facts of human life and the moral judgments of man-

kind. There is not mystery, but contradiction between moral character as deserving reward and punishment and the theory which makes man, body and soul, mere mechanism working according to constitutional laws under the causal necessitation of the strongest motive. Why should man be responsible for the last necessitated links in the series occurring within him as choices, and yet many of the links preceding, and determining his, be non-responsible? It has been well said by Law,<sup>1</sup> "Suppose that I am necessitated to obey the last result of my own judgment. From the *existence of things* follow certain *appearances*, these *appearances* cause certain *perceptions*—i. e., of pleasure or pain, these *perceptions* form a *judgment*, this *judgment* determines the *will*, this *will* produces *action*. All this is fixed and inevitable, every link of the chain is equally necessary, and 'tis all one to me on which my determination hangs. . . . 'Tis easy to observe how destructive this and the like schemes must prove, as well of morality as of liberty, both which must stand and fall together."

(3.) This theory is irreconcilable with the consciousness of freedom in our choices. Whenever

<sup>1</sup> Note 61, on King's *Origin of Evil*,

we discover that we have been necessitated, whether by what is external or internal, we make no pretence to freedom, and know we are determinated by that over which we have no control. But there is a large class of experiences which contain in their very centre a consciousness of real freedom. But on the hypothesis of universal necessitation, as well internal as external, in choices as in their causal antecedents, this consciousness of freedom is a delusion, a fiction of imagination. A direct contradiction emerges here. Either the hypothesis of a necessitated series of choices by causal motives, or conscious freedom is false. Both cannot be true. But if conscious freedom is false, how can the truth of the hypothesis be proved, except by believing the testimony of that very consciousness which we have already convicted of mendacity.

(4.) The theory confounds physical and moral government, and destroys every real distinction between physical and moral agency. This is the well-known aim of not a few scientists of the present day. Adhering to their canons of physical science, they regard all mental and moral phenomena as, in some mysterious way, the subjective correlates or equivalents of physical and objective phenomena. The



moral facts, without solution of continuity of force, are the products of physical processes. The whole is interpretable and interpreted in terms of matter and motive-force. The only government, therefore, possible to man, is strictly physical in its laws and methods.

Theological Necessitarians vigorously deny this effort of the physical scientists to fuse the physical and the moral into one. We, of course, heartily unite with them. But they concede the scientist's premises, and therefore cannot logically deny his conclusion. By their theory of the strongest motive causally determining the will in its choices and consequent actions, they have conceded to the scientist his root-principle of unbroken continuity of force, and its quantitative equivalents in all its transmutations. Let theological Necessitarians, according to their theory, try to break the following links of continuity:—Objects in our environments through our organism causally determinate our sensations; these sensations, our perceptions; these perceptions, our judgments as to the good or evil, pain or pleasure in the objects; these judgments determinate our desires and aversions; these desires and aversions, our strongest motives; and these strongest motives, our choices and consequent

actions. On their own theory, where can the theological Necessitarians find in the continuity of this series a breach wide enough to sever the physical and moral in man as the subject of moral government? Physical facts and moral facts may differ just as any one class of facts differs from another; but they are facts of the same order, subject to the same laws and methods of government. The difference does not so much lie in the nature of the connection and causal relations as in the terms connected. For molecule and mind in every movement is absolutely determinated by its nature and antecedents to be as it is, and do as it does. Moral government and laws of moral responsibility cannot be applied to either, or if to either, then alike to both. There is no difference.

(5.) But if moral government finds no place in man, then God as moral Governor is also excluded, and His moral relations to the universe of things and men are eliminated. Indeed, the same remarks apply to God as well as to men; for whatever is held as truth is no respecter of persons. This strongest motive-force theory maintains that God's will is also determined by the strongest motive, His desire of the highest and best. This

strongest motive is determinated in its turn by the omniscience of God, and this omniscience by His necessarily eternal being. The unbroken continuity of the physicist appears again, thus—the necessary eternal being of God is necessarily omniscient, His omniscience necessarily determines His view of the best possible, His view of the best possible necessarily determines His strongest loves and hatreds forming His strongest motives, and these necessarily determine His choices, and their consequent action in the phenomena of the mental and physical universe. Difference between the natural and moral attributes of God there is none, and can be none. There is no breach of continuity in God, but only a necessary sequence; no personal free will to choose, but only will determinated in phenomenal choice by eternal antecedents in the eternal Being, necessarily self-existent.

Indeed, it seems perfectly clear, that this strongest motive-theory, in all its forms, logically conducts to the denial of a personal God as the moral Governor of the personal man as a moral subject. Some form of Atheism or Pantheism seems the only logical or ideal result of all theories which render the divine or human will necessarily determinated by

causal antecedents. The universe, God, mind, matter, become in logical thought a vast mechanism, distributing and transforming a trunk force, working out a problem in kinetics and statics. An immense, most wonderful, but impersonal universe, grinding out an impersonal result, is all that remains. Let all theological Necessitarians beware how they and their theories contribute to such false and hurtful conclusions. For if the stone is determinated by gravity to fall, the wild beast by passions to act, the man by the most agreeable to choose, with a like result, the destruction of human life, how is it that man alone is criminal, and yet the stone and the animal are not? This theory cannot answer that question, for it grants to the physical scientist his major premise of universal necessitation by antecedent motive-force in mind as in matter, and that necessitation which excuses from responsibility the non-mental, must also excuse the mental movements. There is only natural good or evil, pain or pleasure, but no morality, no moral government, and, therefore, no moral Governor possible, if this theory is true.

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE THELETIC, OR WILL-DETERMINATION  
THEORY.

SINCE the dynamic and psychical theories utterly fail to account for the moralities of and responsibilities found in human life, and in divine moral government; and especially for the facts of human consciousness, on which all moralities and moral governments are based, we are called upon to seek for a theory that will do so. This we think is done by that which we have designated the theletic or will-determination theory. To render what I mean as clear as possible, I will make the following observations:—

(1.) Here let us again remember that in speaking of the intelligence, sensibility, and will, as distinct faculties, powers, or energies, we speak only analytically and for logical purposes, that we may discriminate the complex mental phenomena, and arrange them and the mental energies in three classes. All these energies and all their phenomena belong to the one and self-same indivisible self-

conscious mind. The one self-conscious mind has an energy that *knows*, an energy that *feels*, and an energy that *wills*, and each energy does its own specific work. The former two of these energies, we have already seen, are always determinated in their exertions and products by the objects presented to them, whether objects within the mind or external to it, and, therefore, our knowledges and feelings are necessitated to be as their objects are. But the will-energy in its exertions and products, volitions or choices, we say is not determined by its objects, whether the reasonable in the intelligence, or the good in the sensibility; but, on the contrary, as will-energy itself, it determines its choices, volitions, actions.

For the sake of brevity this has often been called "the self-determination of the will." But there is some ambiguity in the phrase. It seems to make the will-energy the object determinated by itself, whereas it is not the will as energy which is in question, but its specific products, choice or volition. The same ambiguity lurks in the question, "What determines the will?" It implies that the will is first determinated as energy, and then produces its choice. We therefore prefer not

to speak of *determining* the will, or a *self-determining* will, but of *theletic* or *will-determination of choice* as the proper designation of our theory. There can, of course, be no objection to the use of the phrase "self-determining will," and "self-determination of the will," provided it is understood as meaning—the will itself determining its choices or volitions.

(2.) While the will itself determines its own acts or volitions, it is never isolated or unconditioned. It is, in the unity of consciousness, connected with and conditioned by the intelligence with its knowledges, and by the sensibility with its emotions, and also, more remotely, by the bodily organism and the external world, with their means, opportunities, and ends. All the things requisite for acting must be furnished, and so present the possibilities of voluntary action. Taken as a mental energy or proper cause of volition, the will, if placed in a vacuum, with nothing known or felt, and with nothing to be done, could of course do nothing, because there were no possibilities of action furnished. Whenever, therefore, the will determines its acts or choices, it is assumed that it is properly conditioned by the things requisite for acting in one or more directions. As determining

its own choices the will is, in all moral acts, *conditioned*, but *not necessitated*, by its subjective and objective concomitants, so that it is strictly an originant and free cause. But we shall speak of this more fully afterwards, and have said thus much to make matters as clear as possible.

(3.) The will itself, or the theletic energy, determinating its volitions, choices, or actions, does not mean that the will determines *itself* to one act of choice by a preceding act. This is the foundation of Edwards' grand objection to what is called a self-determining will. As elaborated and applied by him, the objection has been, by very many, regarded as utterly destructive to the idea of self-determination of the will in any form, and as, in fact, invincible, unanswered, and unanswerable. Having explained that a self-determining will means, by common consent, "that the person in the exercise of a power of willing or choosing, or the soul acting voluntarily determines,"—he thus states the principle of his destructive argument: the will "determines its own acts by choosing its own acts. If the will determines the will, then choice orders and determines the choice. . . . And, therefore, if the will determines all its own



free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice choosing that act." He goes on with act preceding act till we are brought directly to a contradiction, for this theory supposes "a free act before the *first* free act." This of course is a contradiction, and therefore Edwards contends properly that the theory which involves it cannot be true. He further asserts that the first act of the will, on the self-determination theory, is not free. For since we must either say there is a free act of the will before the first free act of the will, or "we must come at last to an act of the will determining the consequent acts, wherein the will is not self-determined, and so is not a free act." He proceeds to elaborate this series of acts preceding each other, and comes to the conclusion that since the first act of the will cannot be free, even if it determined all the rest in the series, it could only transmit its first determinated act to them, and impart it to them. He with unusual triumph concludes Sect. I., saying, "Thus the Arminian notion of liberty of the will consisting in the will's *self-determination*, is repugnant to itself, and shuts itself wholly out of the world."<sup>1</sup> Not so;

<sup>1</sup> *In.*, Part II., § 1.

for that notion is in the world to this day, properly understood, and we wish to keep it in.

(1.) This attempt of Edwards to reduce the idea of the will determining all its own free acts to the absurdity of a direct contradiction, is based on a pure assumption, a *petitio principii*. He assumes that the will *must determine* the present free act A, by a preceding free act B, B by C, C by E, E by D, and so on for ever, free act before free act. But where does he get his assumption from, that the will *must* determine itself to one act by a preceding act? He begs it, or rather steals it, from his unsuspecting readers, and having stealthily got his false premises granted, he was far too acute a logician not to expose its absurdities. But his starting point is false, and his elaborate argument thus becomes a wonderful, yet ingenious piece of sophistry, commonly thought to be unanswerable. The one full answer is that the whole argument is founded, not on fact, but on pure fiction. When the will-energy of the mind, soul, or personal man, determines the act A, why go to an act B at all. Why should the will be supposed to determine one act by a preceding one at all? There is no such series of acts, one causing another successively in consciousness, none in

the terms of the theory. The theory gives the will-energy of the living soul as the one only immediate cause of each act separately, and consciousness does the same. Edwards reasons well if you let him begin with his false and stolen premises, but he has got no facts, no necessary judgment to start with, no *must* be of thought in the matter. Our simple reply therefore to this great and good man is, "Sir, you begin with a grand mistake, and end with one."

We therefore beg respectfully to lay down, as the simple fact on this matter, that the will-energy of mind is itself the cause or determiner of each act, and directly is the cause of each act, choice, or volition. This is the affirmation of consciousness. If, moreover, we deny that the will is the immediate cause of its own acts, there is no such thing as a cause at all producing its phenomena. On Edwards' principle, we might as well and conclusively reason, that certain alkalies and acids when put into water, must determine themselves to the first fizz by a preceding fizz, and so on for ever, or till there is a fizz before the first fizz, which is a contradiction. Yet it is a contradiction manufactured out of premises false and foolish. Everything conceived as

cause, whether bond or free, must cause immediately when properly conditioned, and produce its own phenomena; so the will, as the mental energy which determines acts, choices, volitions, originates them as their proper cause.

(2.) The argument of Edwards is destructive to his own theory. For let us, like him, suppose that the strongest motive determines the will in its acts of choice; on the same principle we must say, that the motive can determine the will only by a preceding act, and that by a preceding act, and so on, an act going before act in endless regression, till at last a direct contradiction emerges—either there is an act before the first act of the motive, or no first act at all. On Edwards' principle, supposed to be so destructive to the will itself directly originating each choice, the motive cannot be supposed to originate any act. Thus we are thrown into an infinite series, never able to reach a beginning at all. Motive or will, it makes no matter, we never can get a beginning to a present determinate act, without act preceding act *ad infinitum*. The whole argument is a word-puzzle, or a sophism based on arbitrarily assumed premises. The sophism, however, answers the purpose of rendering all acts of will necessary because

necessitated by the strongest motives in each case. No act is originated from man's self-energy, and even if his former choices enter as factors into present motives, they enter as necessitated items. From first to last man has no direct control over any one volitional act in the series. The curious thing, however, is that theologians of this school declare he is free and responsible. Surely there is a contradiction here.

(3.) This argument of Edwards against the will itself determining its acts, choices, volitions, overthrows the idea of a First Cause. This may be no objection to those who desire to interpret the universe; and especially man himself, without reference to the personal God; but it is a serious matter for theological Necessitarians. If the will itself directly causing its present choice is impossible, contradictory, and absurd in thought and terms, then the same thing must be true of God's will. He, too, must determine choice A by a preceding choice B, and so on for ever. A first act is impossible. God's will is, therefore, determined by some strongest motive. God's will is not the origin of, but only the medium of transit to antecedent causes. The Divine will becomes only a link in the series of

necessitated antecedents and consequents, and is not the First Cause. But if motives are the causes determinating the will of God in its choices, what then causes these motives? On the hypothesis of Edwards, no free act anywhere, or of any being, can cause anything. Whence, therefore, the strongest motives determinating the Divine will? They must be found in the necessities of the Eternal Being and its attributes causally necessitating all acts of God's will, and all phenomena in the universe—nothing ever was or will be *originated, created*; all is evolved, transformed; yet all is for ever one and the same. On this hypothesis there seems nothing for it, but to agree with Peter Sterry when he says, in his *Treatise on the Will*, "The essence of God and the operations of God are the same, His knowledge is Himself."<sup>1</sup> "The first images of things, as they rise up from the fountain of eternity in the bosom of this universal and eternal image," he calls "ideas." Then in his mystical, pantheistic, Necessitarian style, he describes the emanation of all things out of the eternal ideas:—"The ideas or images being the only and eternal truths of all things, do *from themselves*, as the true heavens in

<sup>1</sup> p. 36.

eternity, send forth as shadowy figures the *heaven of angels*, these *visible heavens*, the *earth*, all the *elements* with their *inhabitants* and *furniture*." <sup>1</sup> The human "will," says Sterry, "with all its acts and determinations, in their several orders, connections, and circumstances, lie virtually and eminently in the Divine will, as in their first cause, from which, in their proper seasons and places, they flow distinctly forth, as that first will, which is one pure eternal act, unfoldeth *itself into them*." <sup>2</sup>

But all this leads to the inevitable conclusion that the acts of the Divine will are determined by the eternal, necessary, Divine knowledge, which, in virtue of its nature, never originated. God becomes a mere logical circle, in which so-called causes and effects are merely eternal relations in eternal thought. We are driven back to the idea that there is nothing except the eternal being and its eternal attributes, no origin possible of act or creation in the universe. Thus we must follow the Gnostic doctrine of emanation, or the modern notion of evolution in unbroken continuity. There can be no first effect, and therefore no first cause. There is only

<sup>1</sup> p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> p. 43.

eternal being, and eternal attributes as phenomena, somehow revealed in human consciousness.

(4.) The will-determination theory does not mean an equilibrium of the will, or a liberty of indifference. These terms are contributions to this controversy from the schoolmen, and are, as we think, very misleading; and their absurdity is well seen in the fate of Buridan's ass starving to death between two equally attractive bundles of hay. Though this liberty of indifference as essential to free will is advocated by Archbishop King and Edmund Law, yet even in their hands it is misleading, and encumbers their defence of the will itself determining its acts. Limborch in his correspondence with Locke on this very word "indifference" as applied to the will by the Remonstrants, says that they employed it in deference to custom, but added the term "*active*," to show that it was not a passive indifference, and that its meaning was "dominion over our actions;" that when everything requisite to acting was present, we are able to act or not to act. This they called an active indifference, but it was a very inapt phrase by which to denote a positive exertion of energy in decisive action. The



term indifference more naturally denotes exemption from all positive convictions and inclinations or leanings to one side more than another in every alternative of human life and action. Limborch in his letter to Locke<sup>1</sup> says that he does not by indifference mean a state in which man is placed in equilibrium, inclined to no one part more than another, for such a state is found in no man, but a state in which the man has the power of determining himself to any one part of opposite things. Though more inclined to one part than another, he never loses dominion over his own actions, but is able to determine himself to either part. That is clear enough, but the term indifference encumbers the whole idea, and obscures it, and gives rise to a pure war of words. Well therefore does Limborch say, in conclusion, regarding this very misleading term,—“But because this word ‘indifference’ may be taken for that state in which a man inclines to neither part, but is manifestly placed in a state of equilibrium, although that sense is expressly contrary to our explanations, in order to avoid all amphibology I will abstain from that word.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 11th Oct., 1701.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* See also *Episcopus's Responsio ad Defensionem*

If Edwards had considered what Limborch has clearly taught, he might have spared his elaborate argument on this head. Indifference as held by Archbishop King and Law is more exposed to the destructive criticism of Edwards. They held that the will is indifferent to all motives, and renders one or other of them "the strongest" by choosing it, the strongest simply because it is chosen. This theory of indifference is, to say the least of it, both awkward and roundabout as a method of escape from the will's being determined by the strongest motive. The same may be said of the clever, yet ambiguous saying of Coleridge, "It is not the motive makes the man, but the man the motive." For the question still remains, in what sense can any man in willing be indifferent to what is called motive, or have dominion over motives? It seems to us that we can speak of indifference in the acts of the will only when we speak analytically. Speaking analytically, the will-energy as such has neither convictions nor feelings, but only acts for or against convictions and feelings in the thought-energy, or emotive energy of the mind. Conceived of as mere

*Cameronis*, cap. 22, 23, and his *Tractatus de Libero Arbitrio*.

causal energy, neither knowing nor feeling, the will inclines no more to one set of objects and acts than to another, but, like a millstone grinding wheat or corn, it acts indifferently on whatever objects are presented to it. But while this analytical way of speaking is useful for logical purposes, still there is not a concrete, absolute mental indifference when the will-energy acts. Speaking synthetically, when the will-energy chooses or acts, there are, as the objects on which these acts terminate, fixed beliefs and strong urgencies and inclinations of feeling, and mental, conscious indifference is impossible. The term "indifference" accordingly gives rise to confusions and ambiguities. It is not properly descriptive of the will-energy determinating its choices, and is absurd when applied to thought and emotion. We therefore refuse to use it, and disclaim responsibility for the absurdities involved in its use. For the will is never unconditioned, or in a vacuum, when it, as the executive, mental energy, determines one act out of the plurality at present equally possible.

(5.) The will-determination theory denotes the simple primary fact that, as endowed with will-energy, I or the man myself choose, act,

or do something, and as an originating cause effect some change in myself, or in the external world. All our actions or deeds of will have, primarily, respect to mental operations or to bodily movements. While the conditions, internal and external, remain the same, the will-energy of mind determines, as cause, mental and physical movements to begin, cease, remain, or become modified. The will-energy is the power to act, or not to act, or to act otherwise in some respect. According to this account, in virtue of my will-energy as a positive potency in my nature, I am a free, origivative cause, doing some one or other of the plural possibilities now present to me, while at the same time I am conscious that I had power to have done the very opposite. It is I, exercising this will-energy, who determine the choices or series of actions, or, speaking analytically, the will-energy determines them. Therefore, you cannot go behind my will and ask for the efficient cause of these choices or actions. If you do, where can you stop? If you go to the strongest motive, the most agreeable in feeling, what determines that? Not itself, on your theory. If you say, the last judgment of the practical understanding, then, what determines that?

Not itself, on your theory. If you say, from the external world announcing itself by sensations in perceptions, and from the mind announcing its necessary judgments, then, what determines all these? Not themselves, on your theory; and if there is no effective determinant in one or all of these, what determines them all in series? You are in this way driven from pillar to post, backward for ever, seeking an origin for your series, and never can find one except in an act before the first act, and that is a flat contradiction. You must therefore, in rational thought, either find your first cause of the thing done in will-energy, human or divine, behind which you cannot go to ask for a cause of that determinate act, or find none at all, but be hopelessly plunged into an eternal series of successive finite acts, which is also a contradiction in terms, for it is an infinite constituted by finites, a limited series unlimited. All forms of the emanation, evolution theory of unbroken continuity, seeking the present thing done as the necessitated product of an eternal past, compel us, if we would retain the idea of cause, to accept the primary utterance of consciousness, that the will-energy is cause determining its choices or acts, or to accept

its contradictory, an absolute necessity in all acts in man and the kosmos, in God and the creature.

Passing, therefore, from the contradictions to rational thought which arise out of the idea of the will being determinated by something external to it, let us examine the direct deliverance of consciousness concerning it. As a simple, singular fact, I know that my will-energy itself determinates its choices or actions, and originates, as a true and proper cause, new phenomena. As a fact it takes its place, and holds its own in the universe of facts, and is as real as any one of them. I know the will-energy as an original cause of action as a fact, and, for the same reason, and on the same ground, I have certainty concerning it, as I have for any other fact, truth, or principle whatsoever. It is there as a fact of consciousness, and no reasonings, no inferences from other facts, can remove it, or in any way invalidate it. If it is not there, no one can put it there. The fact is, or it is not absolutely.

Our only ground of certainty concerning anything subjective or objective is primarily found in the announcements of consciousness. That this rose is red or that rose is white, that is a man riding on a horse, and this is a

man walking, are facts certified in consciousness. I have no other, no higher proof or ground of certainty. So all knowledges of external objects, all true inferences concerning them, and all accurate classifications of them, are certain to me only as they appear in consciousness. With the idealist you may tell me that there is no external world with distinct objective facts, but only subjective states and ideas; or with the scientist, adhering to his canons of physical science, you may tell me all about the nervous apparatus and its rhythmic vibrations producing such molecular movements in the brain that consciousness emerges, even should it only be as a "by-product." I listen to all you say, still it alters not my position. The point is this, all I know, or can know for certain and without doubt, either about myself or anything else, is primarily the simple announcements of consciousness. Unless these are true and valid, I have, and can have, no knowledge, no certainty, no faith in anything. Therefore to this veracious witness found in consciousness we must appeal, as giving the highest evidence, and hold by its direct testimony, notwithstanding all theories, inferences, and reasonings to the contrary. What, then, do

we find in consciousness as to the fact that the will-energy directly and immediately determines its own acts? In reply, let me state in order the three classes of facts as found within us:—

(1.) We are conscious of necessitation, or being determinated in all the operations of our *thought-energy* or intelligence. In all its primary knowledges and formal operations, the intelligence works under the necessities of its constitution and the nature of the objects on which it is exercised. Taken in itself, there is no freedom to think or know otherwise. When body and mind are in their normal state, we must know things as they are presented to us—as this tree, that stone, &c., and their relation as near or remote, as falling upon us or not. So when once an *a priori* judgment emerges in consciousness, we must know it as self-evidently, universally, and necessarily true. We are not free to think otherwise. We cannot think that nothing ever made something, or that twice two ever made five or seven and three quarters, or that a thing is and is not at the same time. Thus the intelligence, in its primary knowledges, judgments, and in all its formal operations, is declared in consciousness to be determinated



by the laws of its nature and the objects presented to it, to think as it does, and not otherwise. It exercises its energy necessarily as it does, whatever may be the objects to which it is applied. Men devoted to physical science in these days appeal very often to this determinated operation of the intelligence as establishing the unbroken sequence of facts in the outer and inner worlds of matter and thought. But they can make this appeal only by conceding that, while consciousness yields the fact that the intelligence is determinated in its primary knowledges and formal operations, it is to be equally believed on all other matters, without regard to consequences. The value of this we shall see immediately.

(2.) We are conscious of necessitation, or being determinated in all the formal operations of our emotive-energy, or sensibility. When the intelligence presents certain objects and their qualities, certain feelings arise, painful or pleasant, giving birth to desires or aversions, loves or hates, varying from the minimum to the maximum of emotion. These objects as present to the mind necessarily excite these emotions. The sorrow or joy over our friend's condition, as known to us, is neces-

sarily determinated. We have no direct control over the emotions. Desires may arise, possible or impossible of fulfilment, yet they are there determinated by their objects, and the nature of the emotive-energy, to be as they are, and not otherwise.

Thus the thought-energy and the emotive-energy, as it were, link us on in unbroken continuity to the forces of the universe, material and mental, necessarily and without freedom. Instead of "passive powers," as some designate them, they are more properly to be described as determinated energies, uniting us to the great universe, and to God Himself, conditioning the free will-energy which renders us, within certain limits, free agents while environed by manifold necessities.

(3.) But while cheerfully conceding this necessity and determination in and around man to scientific and theological Necessitarians, I maintain the *will-energy* is free in its operations. Let us look at the facts:—

(a.) Things in the intelligence are there as things simply known, things in the sensibility are there as things simply felt to be painful or pleasant, desired or undesired. Those energies of mind make no change in their objects. But

the will-energy has, as its function, doing, acting in relation to thought, feeling, and their objects. Every one is aware of the essential difference as to the facts expressed in these three great verbs, "I know," "I feel," "I do." The first two are the antecedent conditions, presenting to me the means, methods, ends, and opportunities, or, in one word, the possibilities of the third, "I do" this or that. The knowledges and the emotions do not, in consciousness, necessitate or determinate, but only condition "I do." This action is the exertion of will-energy doing something, originating some change or movement in mind or body totally distinct from knowing, or feeling, or their objects. Thus, in front of my window my children are playing at lawn tennis; I am in this room with pen, ink, and paper, writing on the Freedom of the Will. To play with them, or to sit and write on this subject, are things clearly known, and somewhat vigorously felt just now as distinct possibilities. But mere thought and feeling will leave them for ever as mere possibilities. But which is to be, or not to be, done? That is the question. Infinite knowledge as such, or feeling as such, never can answer that question in *fact* or a thing *done*. I know

the possibilities clearly enough, and feel them vividly enough, but that *does* nothing. An absolutely new thing is required; an origination or suspension of movement in mind, in body, in the external world must be made, created, or caused. In virtue of the will-energy with which I am endowed, I find in consciousness that when the one of the two possibilities supposed is determinated, chosen, done, translated from thought and feeling into fact, I have done it. I am the cause of the new movements, internal and external, according to the fixed order of things. I act, do something, cause something, make a change, and have made a break in what otherwise would have been mere continuity. Thus I personally add to the sum of things as a true, proper cause, consciously originating new movements in my mind, in my organism, and in my environments.

(b.) This action, volition, or choice of the will-energy is a free act. That is, in its determination I am consciously free—exempt from any causal determination by external or internal things. I felt free to act, or not to act, while all things remained the same. The possibilities in thought, the possibilities in emotion, the possibilities in my surround-

ings left me consciously free to do, or not to do. When I have determinated the act, I am also conscious that I had the power, and was equally free, to have originated an act the very opposite, and that, too, even though to have done so was both unreasonable and unpleasant. Thus, thoughts however clear, convictions however strong, emotions however urgent, and external opportunities however commodious, still leave me in my will-energy free to act, or not to act. Their relation to me is not that of cause, but only conditions; and my position, as endowed with will-energy, is a personal free cause, conscious that I myself originate new movements in the mind, body, and external world.

(c.) The will-energy, taken as the free cause determinating all its acts or choices, makes a clean and clear break in the continuity of force. In proof of this I again appeal to the datum of fact in consciousness. Exerting my will-energy as a free cause, I know myself as altering, directing, and disposing of extant forces, and causing them to serve other ends than they would have done but for my interference. Continuity of force, in many cases, determinates certain possibilities only; but which one or more of these possibilities shall

become fact, a thing done, I only can determine. The choice or the determination of the fact, thing done, is my free act. If this is not the case, consciousness deceives me; and if false in this, how shall I believe it in anything else—say, its testimony as to facts in physical science?

Our opponents in the scientific world acknowledge that consciousness and its facts refuse to submit to the canons of physical science. It nevertheless does emerge somehow, if only as a "by-product," from molecular motion on the one side, and passes somehow into molecular motion on the other. This rose I now look upon becomes a consciousness within me. I know it, and feel it. I determine or choose to pluck it and put it in my coat, and the organism moves accordingly. Now it is a fact within me, that the possibilities concerning that rose presented in my thoughts and feelings never did, never could with unbroken continuity causally determine the plucking of it from its stem, and the placing of it in my coat. I grant unbroken continuity of force up to and in the emergence of thought and feeling. But there is an arrest there, and only a set of undetermined possibilities presented—undetermined for ever,

till a new movement arises. The origin of that new movement is found in my will-energy as a free cause, determinating that new series of molecular motions which result in the transference of the rose to my coat-breast. The same is true of internal changes in thought and feeling. Objects are presented to the mind by the unbroken continuity of determinated forces, but the continuance or suspension of thought and emotive-energy on these objects, is determinated by the will-energy in what is usually called acts of attention. The necessitated series, determinating thought and feeling in all practical affairs of life, comes with possibilities alone, and as such remains for ever as only things thought and felt, not things done. Which of these manifold possibilities shall become fact, a thing done? Thought or feeling, even though infinite, cannot determine; they may determine which ought to be, but that does nothing in the causing of it to be. The continuity of force, with its necessitated series, is finally arrested in consciousness in the bare possibilities presented in the thought and emotive energies. The will-energy of mind, as the free cause, originates the new mental and physical move-

ments, which translate the possible into fact. It determinates mental movements on objects ; controls, directs, and applies them to chosen uses and ends. In like manner, the will-energy originates, continues, or suspends muscular movements, and determinates their chosen uses and ends. This will-energy which breaks the continuity of force and its necessitated series within us and around us, which directs and controls that force in new channels, and uses it for new purposes, constitutes us moral agents. The sphere of its control exactly measures the sphere of *moral*, as distinguished from *physical* government. The scientist adhering to his canons of physical science, and regarding consciousness and its phenomena as "by-products," consistently denies this will-energy as a free cause originating new movements in mind and matter. But his science, however, is built upon the very consciousness which it ignores and excludes, and is therefore suicidal.

The theological Necessitarian, while asserting strongly all the moralities of man as a moral agent and of God as moral governor, also ignores the very facts in consciousness on which the moral system is based. With the scientist, he maintains that, from within



and from without, antecedent motive-forces determinate or necessitate the will-energy, all its choices, and consequent conduct of life. He thereby abolishes every real distinction between the origin or causes in physics and morals. Necessitarian theologians and scientists alike fail to recognise the generic principle of morals and moral government in consciousness, declaring the fact, that *thoughts and feelings*, whether in God or man, are, from their nature, never *causes* of choices, or acts of the will-energy, but are only presentations of *possibilities* to be translated into facts, by the will itself as a free cause determining certain breaches of continuity in the mind and its environments. In proof of all this, I can only point to the simple facts of consciousness. According to these, we find that the will itself, as the free causal energy of mind, chooses or determinates which unit of the present possibilities shall become fact, a thing done, and also at what point in the necessitated series, or continuity of force, there shall be a breach, and a new movement in a new direction shall commence. It is precisely within the area of these disruptions in dynamic and psychical forces by the will-energy, as a free cause, that we find the possibility of morality.

In our consciousness of them, moreover, we find all the primary facts which measure and define the sphere of all moralities, and of all conceivable moral governments. The theological Necessitarian unhappily abandons the whole lines from which to defend successfully morals in man and moral government in God, and surrenders everything into the hand of the physical scientist, who interprets the universe in terms of matter, motive-force, and resultant, necessitated movements alike in souls and matter, so-called.

The only objection to the view of the facts of consciousness above given to which I shall refer, is to this effect, we are conscious of only choosing as we please, or of having power to choose only as we do, but are not conscious of power to choose otherwise. The reason is, we never do choose otherwise, never exert power to choose otherwise, and, therefore, cannot be conscious of that power which is plainly unexerted. My reply is—True, we are not conscious of *exerting* it, but we are conscious of *having* it, whenever alternative choices are presented to us. We are as conscious of power to do the one as the other, and without this direct affirmation in consciousness of power to do either, we

would declare the one or other alternative impossible, and not a matter of choice at all. The power, ability to do one or other of two things is in the nature of things essential to choice. In every choice we are conscious of having the power or ability to do otherwise.

If it be further said, we are only conscious of the *idea* that we have the power, but not that we *have* it; I reply—The *idea* that we have the power, and *having* it, are *one and the same*. The *idea* in this case, is the *fact as known*. How can we know anything unless we have the idea, mental presentation, or notion of it? In primary knowledges in consciousness, the thought and the thing, subject knowing and object known, stand face to face. Remove the idea, and the consciousness vanishes; postulate consciousness with its fact, and the idea exists. Thus the idea and the fact are mentally one in this case. Or the other alternative must be taken, that the idea is a mere fiction, having no ground in facts of consciousness. But if consciousness, with its intuitions, ideas, or vision of power to act otherwise, is deceptive, when are we to believe its announcements? If these are false, and the ideas or vision of them are false, absolute scepticism must ensue, and all our

boasted science and its facts and laws become a magnificent structure resting upon the insecure basis of a mendacious consciousness; yea, truthful nature herself must have organised us as self-deceivers at the very roots of our rational thought.

That there are necessities and continuity of force all round about the human will, limiting and defining the sphere of freedom of action by the will-energy, we have fully conceded, and will yet more fully consider in its place. The point which we have sought to establish is, that the will-energy is the proper free cause of its choices, undetermined by antecedent causes. While no new force may be created; yet, as a free cause, the will-energy regulates, controls extant forces, whether internal or external, and originates new movements both in mind and matter.

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## CHAPTER VII.

FREEDOM OF WILL AND THE IDEA OF CAUSE.

THE causal judgment, "whatever begins to be must have a cause," is necessary, universal, and

self-evident. When this judgment has once appeared in thought, it cannot be thought away, or thought to be false. Explain this causal idea as men will, it remains in full force, compelling us to think an adequate cause for every change. It may be said, that the idea of cause is only the idea of antecedent and consequent inseparably associated together in our human thoughts, so that the opposite is unthinkable by us from our experience, yet other rational minds in other worlds may be without this causal judgment, and be under no necessity to think that everything that begins to be *must* have a cause. If that were so, it would only prove the ignorance of such minds—they knew no better. But as to what other people in other worlds may think on the causal judgment and its absolute validity or invalidity, we must allow them to settle among themselves. We have to do simply with what we as at present constituted *must think*. The causal judgment, expressed in the axiom, "Whatever begins to be must have a cause," is one of the *necessities* in human thought.

What, then, is the origin of the simple idea or notion of cause? We require to look at that first, before we can deal with the universal axiom. For the question primarily is, On what

does the universal affirmative causal judgment rest? Has it a basis in fact, or is it a mere universal dream having no solid basis? Is the causal judgment a mere persistent association of limited experiences, falsely assuming to be absolutely universal and necessary in all human thought? On what, then, does this causal judgment rest?

(1.) It is generally admitted that we do not derive the simple idea of cause from the external world and its changes. As spectators of phenomena in the world beyond our bodily organisms, we simply observe changes—certain antecedents and consequents in a fixed order. If the one is present, we expect under the same conditions to see the other, as in the explosion of gunpowder when touched with fire. We do not see power, force, energy, or cause, but only a series of changes. Hence, all who hold that there is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses, are unable consistently to account for our simple idea of power, force, or cause. Sense-perceptions of the extra-organic world give no knowledge of power or cause, and no possible reflection on or combinations of them can yield what was never in them. Hume and others have clearly shown this.

(2.) Dr. M'Cosh contends, in his *Intuitions of the Mind*, that we have a direct intuition of power in the external world, and in knowing substance we know it as having active power. There is, we think, some confusion in his account of this matter. No doubt, our bodies when affected by the outer world transmit material changes into consciousness, which awaken always the ideas of self and not-self. But the idea of power, force, or cause, does not seem necessarily to be involved. When, however, our sense-perceptions, in addition to giving us knowledge that things exist, also give us a push, pressure, or stroke exciting muscular resistance, it may be said that we know them as having power, exerting force, or as causes. There is, in such cases, produced within us what Hume very well calls an "animal nisus" or effort, a resistance which he regards as the best idea we have of power, or cause. Looking at two billiard balls, the one moving when struck by the other, I see no power, no cause, but only change of motions; I only *hear* a click at the moment of impact, but nothing of power or force. But if the ball in motion strike my hand, there is what I call pressure, push, or force discovered in the muscular resistance produced. These *collisions*

of self and not-self yield, without doubt, the idea of cause, force, energy. But is it the self or not-self which is primarily discovered as cause? It is self knowing itself as resistant, and so necessarily interprets the resistant not-self in terms of its own consciousness of causal power. The idea of power, force, cause in the external world, necessarily emerges from the primary collisions of self and not-self in muscular resistance; but it is a necessary projection of the idea as first found in self to external objects, for matter must, in the last analysis, be interpreted in terms of mind. Hence the validity and universality of the causal idea when applied to the external world. While, therefore, the idea of force, energy, cause, in external things, may not be entitled to rank as a primary intuition, it is without doubt a necessary judgment, affirming the necessary relations of things intuitively known. Accordingly, in common, and also in scientific speech, force, energy, power, cause, are affirmed of external objects. Even when scientists apparently deny that the idea of cause is anything more than a persistent association of antecedent and consequent without any causal nexus, we are compelled to read between the lines the idea of cause,



substance exerting force, energy determining effects. This idea, or intuition of cause, however, is primarily found in the consciousness of self as a cause. By the necessities of its rational nature, the mind interprets its collisions with not-self in the causal terms of its own nature. Mind in self-consciousness necessarily and intuitively knows itself as cause.

(3.) The mind, as endowed with the freedom of will-energy, gives us the idea of a first cause. As we have already seen, the will-energy, within certain limits, originates new movements, determinates them rather than others equally possible at the same time. Our fullest, most complete idea of cause is given in the consciousness of freedom in will-energy to act or not to act, while all the circumstances within and around remain the same.

As undetermined by any antecedent, the will-energy determining one act out of many possible, gives the *first cause* of a new series, and produces breaks in the series resulting from continuity of force all around.

This differentiates the mind, as a first cause, from all non-mental, external causes. Material causes are all determined in their very nature to only a unit of possible operation at the time. But mental causes, in virtue of their

freedom of will-energy, determinate the one act out of a plurality of possible operations. The causal energy in material causes under the same conditions *must* act as they do, and not otherwise, as scientists so admirably define and expound. But the causal energy of mind *may* act or not, or otherwise than it does, is the announcement of consciousness, declaring the mind to be a *First Cause* of a new series of movements, whether mental or physical.

(4.) The causal judgment, "Whatever begins to be must have a cause," is verified and fulfilled in all material causes necessarily determined to the unit of possible action by secular processes and cosmic changes. On this unmeasured persistence, transformation of force, or cause, men of science expatiate with delight, and very properly, at times, are filled with sentiments of profound awe. But we are not satisfied with this immense, yet determined series of physical causes and effects, as the final explanation of the whole. Grant the persistence or continuity of force in the physical world, determined at each step by some antecedent, and so on regressively, we at last come to the question, Whence the original determination which determined all that follows? The only

possible alternative in rational thought is, either there is no original determination, for the series is infinite, or the first cause determines the whole series of determinated causes and their phenomena. The first part of the alternative is unthinkable, because it is a direct contradiction. Each unit of substance, act, operation in the series, is finite, measured by limited times and spaces, and finites added to finites never can constitute an infinite. An infinite *series* is a solecism in thought, for it is a finite number of things in succession, which never can be infinite. Since the first part of the alternative must be rejected, the second must be accepted. There must be a first cause of the unmeasured series. The only first cause we know is mind with its freedom of will-energy determinating its own acts, and determinating new movements in series. The causal judgment, "Whatever begins to be must have a cause," necessitates us to think of the first cause determinating the innumerable series of causal operations. Still further, since a first cause as directly known to us is mind possessing freedom of will-energy, the first cause of all causes must be an eternal mind, whom we call God, and whom we must conceive of as, by His will-energy, originally

determinating the extant cosmical series of material causes and effects, and as originating this series rather than others equally possible.

Instead of God, the First Cause, being unknown and unknowable, the knowledge of Him as such is the rational implicate of the knowledge of self as a first cause of a new series. For in our knowledge of self as a finite first cause, there is involved the idea of God as the infinite First Cause determining material and irrational causes in all their operations. Even H. Spencer is compelled to acknowledge as much. For, granting that subjective and objective phenomena are alike to be regarded as symbols of the unknown reality which underlies both, these symbols at least teach us that this reality *exists*. Moreover, he asserts that this reality underlies all phenomena as *cause*, and that lets us know a great deal, for cause, as we know it, is rational mind possessing freedom of will-energy, ever determining mental and physical movements. But this is just our conception of God as presented to us in our Bible, and in the person of Jesus Christ. Mr. Herbert Spencer indeed tells us somewhere, that we cannot rise above our symbols, material and mental. But in that case they are symbols,

signs, signifying nothing, not even that there is an unknown reality behind them. But they are symbols which mean to man made in God's image, an infinite intelligent Being who is the first cause of finite, time and space-measured existence.

This freedom of will-energy in man, by giving us the idea of a free first cause, gives us also the basis of the idea of God as cause, and enables us to meet satisfactorily all physical theories of man and the universe which exclude God. The theological Necessitarian, in our judgment, must fail in his encounters with the physical Necessitarian, for he agrees with his opponents that the will-energy of man is determined by antecedents in common with animals and inorganic elements, and so has no data in consciousness by which to establish a free first cause in man and in God, yea, no data on which the causal judgment itself can legitimately rest. We therefore contend that only on our principles, that our will-energy is free from antecedent determination, and determines its own acts, conditioned by intelligence and sensibility, are we able to conceive of God as the intelligent *First Cause*, God over all, blessed forever.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FREEDOM OF WILL AND FIXED LAWS AND CONTINUITY OF FORCE.

THE question is asked, How can the will be free since all things surrounding us in mind and body are subject to fixed laws and continuity of force? I answer,—

(1.) Fixed laws are not substances, nor are they qualities of substances, and therefore they are not causes. Laws are mental contributions to the science of things. They simply denote the order, methods, or rules, according to which the mind has observed and generalised the occurrence of phenomena. As generalised expressions of the order of phenomena, laws are mental products or logical formulæ applied to nature.

Fixed laws are something in the mind knowing, and not in the particular phenomenon known, something which the mind brings with it, and according to which it arranges or classifies phenomena in an order or method. Fixed laws consequently denote,

not causality in the production of phenomena, but are simply the highest generalised conceptions and expressions of the order and method in which causes, bond or free, operate.

All this is self-evident the moment we attempt to define the term "*fixed law*." What do you mean? You say the *fixed invariable* order or method, or something to the like effect. But where do you get that "*fixed*," that "*invariable*?" You have, can have, only a unit of observation at a unit of time, and so your observations of successive units of fact, at successive units of time, are in themselves singular, separate, as a row of single, separate peas or grains of sand, and not one of them singly, separately constitutes a class, order, or method, or fixed law. Where do you get the class, the order, the method, or the fixed and invariable law? It is a mental contribution to the observed facts. The observed singular facts are held together by memory in miscellaneous crowds, a sort of chaos. But these facts, by the judicial processes of abstraction and generalisation, are assorted into classes or orders, according to the invariable laws or methods of their operation. Fixed laws and methods, fixed classes and orders are alike mental contributions in the arrangements and

classification of phenomena, and are logical, not causal.

This reveals the inconsistency of those who, adhering to the canons of physical science, ignore the validity of consciousness to its own facts and operations. These canons are every one of them derived from consciousness. Class, order, law, are mental concepts, without which physical science is impossible. Single facts mean nothing in articulated knowledge or science, till the mind itself contributes its formulæ as the golden cups to hold the nectar of observed phenomenon. Why, therefore, treat this consciousness as an unthinkable by-product according to canons of physical science, when these very canons are the peculiar products of consciousness. It is a bad sign when a son becomes so proud that he denies his father, and yet seeks to appear in the honours which belong to that father, and which he never could have gained by his own merit.

Since, therefore, fixed laws are mental forms holding together in classes, orders, and methods, isolated phenomena, and are logical, not causal, it follows that freedom of will-energy, determining its own acts, will also have fixed laws in its operations and production of its phenomena. This we think is self-evident.



(2.) As to continuity of force, we readily concede that it is one of the most general laws of nature. In a certain sense, no doubt, there is a constant sum of physical energy in the universe, and a perpetual transformation and transference of it. But my will-energy may nevertheless be free to choose and determinate in fact, some one of the myriad possibilities of movement as things now stand. In throwing this cricket ball with a certain momentum and direction, I do not originate any new force, nor does the batsman who strikes it and sends it in a new direction far into the field. Still, who or what liberated in him and in me the force which passed from us into the ball? Neither the ball, nor the bat, nor the ground on which we stood. It was we ourselves in our will-energy who set the forces free, and determinated their momentum and direction. The physical energies stored up in my body are certainly not created by me, but as there they can pass into the cricket ball or other objects only through my will-energy determinating them, and sending them forth with an aim in one direction rather than in another. There is not a breach of continuity in the existence of the forces, but there clearly is a breach in their direction, uses, and ends.

The physical force stored up in my organism, it may be in very unstable equilibrium, I consciously determine so as to throw a cricket ball, or write these very words. Whether it is the one or the other, the nervous and muscular apparatus discharges force as it does because I so will or determinate the first causal act in the series. This liberation and direction of nervous and muscular force is my conscious act, for which I am universally regarded as responsible. This is the root of the whole question, so far as my muscular force is concerned. I neither create it nor the apparatus by which it is transmitted. They are both external to the will. But the will, in virtue of my very nature, is so related to the apparatus and its forces, that they are subject to its control and guidance; and therefore it can originate, continue, or suspend the liberation of the force, and the movements of the organism. My will-energy stands at the head of all such movements as the first cause, because it liberates the force, and controls it for chosen ends. The locomotive engine is there, with its special structure, subject to certain laws of motion, and with stored up force in its boiler. But it is standing motionless on the rails. The driver is there, too, but is mo-

tionless like the engine. The engine's apparatus for moving cannot and does not liberate the force which moves it. The driver's hand, and arm, and nerves, and brain molecules do not liberate the force which move them. But now, the driver, in the exercise of his will-energy, chooses or determines to move his hand, which liberates nerve and muscular force, which moves the valve, liberates the force in the steam, which moves the engine as he willed, and because *he willed*. He has changed no physical law, created no new physical force, yet he has, by an initial, determinate volition, a superphysical, mental act, originated or caused the whole series of movements in nerve, muscle, engine, waggons, rails, earth, air, and stars, for anything I know.

Passing over the molecular movements in the brain involved, it is said, in all mental processes, and of which we have no direct consciousness, let us glance at what we may call pure mental movements. When thinking of a friend and our last conversation, thought suggests thought, emotion follows emotion in quick succession, and all these according to the fixed laws of my mental nature. But I am incessantly interfering with the trains of associated thought and feeling, giving or

refusing attention to this or that item, and thus modifying and controlling the entire procession of thought and feeling. Whence these new movements in the thought and emotive energies, and whence these new applications and uses of the constant sum of force resident in the thought and emotive energies of mind? Consciousness at once answers that I myself, in the exercise of the will-energy as possessing freedom, determinate my acts of attention, fixing, limiting thoughts and emotions to the selected topics. I change no law of thought, feeling, or action; I create no new force or mental energy; but the will-energy with which my Creator has endowed me, in freedom, determinates the acts of attention, originating, continuing, or suspending them. In this freedom of the will-energy I have dominion over all mental acts and energies in their applications, uses, and ends. In virtue of this dominion over my own actions, I am responsible for them and their direct consequences. Environed by necessities, and under manifold limitations, there is yet a sphere in which we are the masters of our own actions, and can use all the necessary forces of nature to do our will and work for our self-chosen ends. It is the use, not the existence of energy for

which we are responsible. The stored up energy in that caged tiger would necessarily go forth in the destruction of that child now gazing on it, and that tiger is not responsible. But let a man open the door of that cage, and liberate the tiger-energy and the child be slain, he is to blame. Why? The freedom of will-energy in the man is the reason.

Finally, I have conceded the idea of force or energy to physical scientists, of which they make so much in their expositions of the universe. But where do they get the idea of force, energy, cause, which, though apparently sometimes denied, must yet be read in between the lines of their speculations? They cannot get it, as we have seen, from being spectators of invariable antecedents and consequents in the external world. Nor is it found in the "animal nîsus" of muscular resistance alone. For whence the muscular tension to resist? Where is it known? It is in consciousness when I know myself as resisting in my will-energy, conscious that I am able to continue or suspend the resistance. Here, again, we find that force, energy, or cause, whether as a fact or as a causal judgment, is a contribution of mind by which the true interpretation of man and the universe is possible, and in the truest sense scientific.

## CHAPTER IX.

## FREEDOM OF WILL AND MOTIVES.

As used in this controversy, the term motive is somewhat ambiguous, and therefore misleading. It requires to be carefully defined, and its meaning kept within its proper limits. Even those who have advocated the freedom of the will have spoken with some confusion regarding motives. By his strong common sense, Chubb discerned the true nature of motive, yet he failed in consistently working out his idea. In his *Origin of Evil*, Archbishop King misapprehends the nature of motives, and speaks of the strongest motive as dependent on the will. Edwards takes full advantage of the prevailing confusion in the use of the term, much to the disadvantage of his opponents. What, then, is the meaning of the term motive, and what is its relation to the will and its volitions? In reply, I desire to make the following remarks:—

1. The term motive, with its analogies and associations, has been imported into the mental

from the physical sphere of things. In physics, motive denotes that which moves, or has a tendency to move, and, if strong enough, is, in fact, the cause of motion. The term motive, when thus used, carries in the very centre of its meaning the idea of a proper cause—causal necessitation of given movements. When, therefore, this term motive is transferred to mind and mental processes, it brings with it the idea of a dynamic momentum, or strictly causal force determinating the will and its choices and actions, just as steam is the motive which determinates all the movements in the engine and attached machinery. The term thus gives a false, mechanic analogy, and a very misleading cluster of associations, so that we conceive motive as a proper cause necessarily determinating the will and its acts. It is this conception of the nature of motives and their relation to acts of the will on which the whole argument of Edwards on this question is based. He assumes throughout his argument that motive, as applied to acts of will, must mean the same as when it is applied to matter. If this one assumption is removed, his reasonings become a huge *ignoratio elenchi*.

From the physical analogies contained in

the term motive, and especially from its usage as denoting that which determines or causes the will to act as it does, it might be well if the term were altogether discontinued. This, however, may not, as yet, be possible, as the term is so firmly established in current speech. But if it is still used, as no doubt it will be, it ought to be used as denoting, when applied to mind, what it denotes when applied to matter: In both cases it ought to mean simply, and without reservation or ambiguity, the proper cause of movement in mind as of movement in matter. Then all will be clear, and all questions of necessity, freedom, and responsibility in mind and matter will rest on the same basis—motives as proper causes necessarily determinating their proper effects.

2. The term motive, defined as denoting the proper cause of mental movements, can be correctly applied only to the determination of intellectual and emotional states, but not to the will and its volitions.

In its meaning and usage, the term motive was shaped in accordance with the old and false psychology which taught that our mental faculties were twofold only,—consisting in the intellect and the will. Some Necessitarians, in speaking of motive, give prominence to



the intellectual side, saying that the last judgment of the practical intellect with its representation of the good or evil, necessarily determines the will to choose as it does. Others, like Edwards, give prominence to the emotional side. While they admit that "in some sense the will always follows the last dictate of the understanding," yet it is only as the understanding presents what is felt as good, most agreeable at present, that its dictates or judgments have the force of motive, or determine the will. Hence the well-known dictum of Edwards, "The will is always determined by the strongest motive," and this motive he defines as "the most agreeable at present." He gives his best and final expression of opinion in the proposition,—*"The will always is as the greatest apparent good is."* But whether the first place in motive is given to the intellectual or emotional side, both are the same in principle, and result in an absolute causal determination of all mental states—motives being the proper causes. According to this theory, the order of sequence is: (1.) Objects, as the motive cause, determine in the intellect the perceptions and judgments of them as good or evil. (2.) These perceptions and judgments, as motive-cause, determine

in the will desires or aversions, likes or dislikes, &c. (3.) Those desires which are the strongest or the most agreeable, as motive-cause, determine the will to choose or not to choose, to act or not to act. Thus, on the principles of Necessitarians, the term motive is consistently used as denoting the proper cause of all movements in thought, feeling, and choice, primarily determinated by the objects which present themselves. The final result is an absolute determinism in all mental as well as in all material movements. But if that is the case, on what principle is man responsible for his movements, and matter is not for its, since both alike are causally necessitated to be as they are, and do as they do?

But as we have already seen, the correct and now generally received psychology gives a threefold classification of mental powers or energies,—the intelligence, or thought energy; the sensibility, or emotion energy; and the will, or volition energy. Now, while we grant that the term motive, as cause of movement, with its mechanic analogies, may be applied to the movements in thought and emotion, yet it ought to be rigorously restricted to them, and ought not to be

extended to the will. The will-energy itself is the proper cause determinating its own movements. Motives and their resultant movements terminate on and within the intelligence and sensibility, and extend no further in necessary sequence. The final feelings of greatest pain or pleasure, inclination or disinclination, desire or aversion, and all the urgencies of soul involved in these, are final effects in consciousness, and must for ever remain such, till some new movement is originated relative to them, and determinates changes concerning them. Even infinite thought and feeling as such are only infinite possibilities immanent in knowledges and emotions, and in themselves do not cause or determinate action and things done. It is the will-energy alone which determinates action on the possibilities contained in thought and emotion, and converts them from things known and felt into things done, facts. Hence, we contend that motives taken as meaning proper causes of movement do not and cannot apply to choices or acts of will.

It, therefore, seems to us that accuracy of thought demands a recasting of terms in this controversy, so that we may have terms properly descriptive of the threefold mental

energies and their phenomena. These terms are furnished by the correct psychology now generally accepted. In all rational voluntary action, we have—(1.) The intelligence with its determinated knowledges and judgments, as *reasons*; (2.) the sensibility, or emotive-energy, with its determinated feelings, or desires and aversions, pains and pleasures, and urgencies in general, as *inducements*, or *ends*; (3.) the will, or exertive energy, with its *determinating* choices, or things done. These definitions or explanations, if we still retain the term motive with its material and dynamic association, will lead us to restrict it to the causal determination of thought and feeling by their objects, but not to the will and its choices or actions.

3. As now explained, motives so-called are not the *causes*, but are only the prerequisite *conditions* of volition or choice in the will-energy. We have just seen that the term "motives," if used at all, ought to be restricted to the intelligence and sensibility with their contents. As such, motives are not the causes of volition. What, then, is their relation to the will-energy and its choices or actions? They are the prerequisite rational and emotional *conditions* presenting *manifold possibilities*, which

the will-energy may or may not choose and determinate into fact,—a something done, internal or external.

The distinction between cause and its conditions is of radical importance in this controversy. It has often been lost sight of, and the result has been not a little confusion. The celebrated principle known as "The sufficient reason" necessarily ran the ideas of causes and conditions together. The same thing was done by the division of causes into efficient, material, formal, final, &c. According to these formulæ of thought, everything which had any connection whatsoever, whether negative or positive, in the doing of a thing, was dignified with the name of a cause. But such boundless elasticity in the meaning of a term could result only in confusion of thought and language.

This is conspicuously seen in the great Edwards himself. His whole argument on cause relative to the will is vitiated, and bewilders both himself and his readers, by the use he makes of the term cause as meaning anything and everything, negative or positive, which has to do with what comes to pass. In proving that acts of will require a cause, he proves nothing which needs proof

to any sane mind. The point is, what is the cause of acts of will? In trying to prove that it is not the will, but something else, something outside the will, he claims unlimited freedom in the meaning and use of the term cause. In Part II., Section 3, of his *Inquiry*, Edwards says, "I sometimes use the word cause, in this inquiry, to signify *any antecedent*, either natural or moral, positive or negative, on which an event, either a thing, or the manner and circumstances of a thing, so depends, that it is the ground and reason, either in whole or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is, rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that event is true, whether it has any positive influence or not." According to this, a cause may be anything and everything, or nothing. To argue concerning cause on such terms is worse than useless, for everything in the universe may be declared to be a cause of volition, negative or positive, "whether it has any positive influence or not." It is the principle of "the sufficient reason" run mad, confounding "reasons" in logic with

concrete causes and their effects in the nature of things.

We therefore must restrict the term cause to its proper meaning, as denoting "*efficient cause*." But for the confounding latitude of meaning given to the term cause by Edwards and others, there is and can be no difficulty as to the cause of volition, and the relation of knowledges and emotions to it. The will-energy inherent in the very soul itself is the one sole *cause* which originates the fact-existence of volition. Knowledges and emotions are the prerequisite *conditions*, which do not necessitate the choices, but only present the means, opportunities, or, in a word, the possibilities, which the will-energy may determinate into facts, things done.

This distinction between a proper cause and its requisite conditions is well known. No cause exerts its specific energy in a vacuum. It must have the appropriate materials on which to work and expend its special causal energy, that is, it must have means, opportunities, as tools to work with. Without these, the cause has nothing to do, and nothing to do that nothing with, and nothing multiplied by nothing is nothing for ever. Oxygen is a substance charged with a causal energy in its very

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nature, but if placed in a vacuum, as unconditioned by other substances, it of course cannot do anything or produce an effect. Give it the means and opportunities in the presence of other substances, and it originates changes which no other substance ever does, and these are effects of which it is the one proper cause; so with the other substances, each has its specific phenomena as its own effect or product. So clay and straw were conditions prerequisite to brickmaking in Egypt, but they were not the causes of the bricks being made. That cause was found in the men of Israel. The brickmaking cause in Israel, when unconditioned, had no means, opportunity, or tools to work with. But though these conditions were supplied, it did not necessarily follow that bricks would be fashioned, made by the cause in Israel. This pen, ink, and paper are conditions, but not the causes of these words being now written; yea hand, muscles, nerves, are not the cause of this writing; yea knowledge, emotion are not the proper cause. All these are only means, opportunities, possibilities, conditions prerequisite to the will-energy in me, producing the final result. Thus, taking the term cause in its proper sense, it must be



conditioned by means, opportunities, and possibilities according to its nature, and then it lays hold of them, and by its causal energy coordinates them, and determinates them into some final effect. It is therefore evident that proper efficient causes ought to be sharply discriminated from their conditions; clearness of thought demands this. It is no doubt true that these conditions, means, opportunities, possibilities, used or applied by the cause, become con-causes, contributing their own phenomena to the complex results. Nevertheless they are all, in the case supposed, determinated by the true efficient cause which originated and controls the entire series of movements terminating in some final effect.

Having made these needful distinctions between causes in general and their prerequisite conditions, we are enabled to answer some questions raised by Necessitarians concerning the relation of so-called motives to the acts of the will. Motives so-called, whether taken as the last judgments of the practical intellect, or as the most agreeable, most desired in feeling, are only prerequisite conditions furnishing the means, methods, and ends, as possibilities of choice by the will-energy as the proper cause. The will-energy

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originates the new movements, whether internal or external, which accept or reject the reasons in the intelligence, and the desires, inclinations, &c., in the sensibility. The mind, or the man himself, in the unity of self-consciousness, and as ever present to himself, contains within himself rational, emotional energies and their contents, presenting the conditions or means, methods and ends, as possibilities to be done, and become facts. He also contains consciously within himself the will-energy, as a proper cause, free to act or not to act, and therefore to cause or not to cause any unit of the plural possibilities furnished in thought and emotion.

If it is said, the question is not, why does the will act, but, why does it act thus and not otherwise, or why does it go in this rather than in that direction? The reply is, what do you mean by that *why*? Do you mean for what reasons, or for what ends? Then, we point you to the intelligence as furnishing the knowledges, judgments, or reasons why the will-energy acts as it does. If you mean by that "*why*?" for what feelings of pain or pleasure, desire or aversion, agreeableness or uneasiness? We direct you to the sensibility, or emotive energy, with its emotions, impulses,

and urgencies of feeling as furnishing the emotional inducements on account of which the will acted as it did and not otherwise. If, however, you mean "*why?*" in the sense of what *cause* produced, originated this act and not others equally possible? The answer is, the will-energy, conditioned by the contents of the intelligence and sensibility, as a free cause, determinated that one choice, excluding others equally possible.

We have freely and fully conceded the necessity of knowledges, judgments, and reasons in the intelligence, and also the necessity and great influence of emotional urgencies in the sensibility. The one supplies the facts, judgments, methods, and ends, the other furnishes feelings, painful or pleasant, often very urgent; and both conjointly or separately present the conditions and possibilities of rational moral action. Synthetically viewed the mind, or the man himself, is never in a state of indifference concerning what may or may not be done. More or less he knows and feels what may or may not be done, and why. But knowing and feeling, even though infinite, never in themselves can go further than what is, may be, or ought to be. It is the mind, or the man himself in his will-

energy, that determinates certain units of the possible into facts,—things done.

If, finally, it is objected that if thoughts and feelings, reasons and motives, have influence at all, it may be easily supposed that the influence might be so increased that it would overpower the will, and necessarily determine it; yea, that every degree of influence brought to bear on the mind proportionally decreases its freedom, and if only strong enough would totally destroy it. The answer to this objection is, that the influence spoken of is on and within the intelligence and sensibility, which have no causal relation to the will, and do not operate on it according to the laws of mechanics. If, however, thoughts and feelings do overpower the will, and the man is helpless before the rush of thoughts, feelings, and irresistible influence, he is either in a state of irresponsible panic or madness itself—a mental and moral chaos exists, and the normal man is for the time being crushed, and rational self-control annihilated.

4. Motives so-called, in relation to the will, are not only prerequisite conditions, but are also ends or aims on which it determinates its action. This seems to be the special relation which motives, consisting of representations

of the true and false in thoughts, and of the painful and pleasant in feeling, sustains to the will-energy. Objects now known and felt as true and good, or false and evil in consciousness, are the objects, aims, or ends on which the will-energy determines its action, and originates changes and new relations between the mind and them. Within the thought-energy and within the emotion-energy, these objects may be called motives, producing as causes movements of thought and feeling. But these objects, known and felt as good or evil, are final ends or final causes relative to will-energy, on which its action terminates, choosing or refusing them, acting in agreement or non-agreement with them. Hence the knowledge of the best possible and the desire of the *summum bonum*, whether in the infinite or finite mind, are not causal motives determining the choice of God or man; but are non-causal final ends, determinated in facts, things done, by the will-energy, as the efficient cause. It is truly said, therefore, that man's moral acts, conduct, and character must be judged according to his motives; because these motives in thought and feeling contain, relative to the will, the aims, ends freely chosen and determinated into facts by the will-energy itself.

## CHAPTER X.

## FREEDOM OF WILL AND LIBERTY.

IN this discussion the terms liberty and necessity are affirmed or denied of the will-energy as the cause of volition. Their meaning must therefore be restricted to the sphere of causation. The necessities or liberties in the environments, antecedents, or subsequents of choices are distinct from the question of the will-energy being exempt from causal necessitation. The question is simply this—Is the will-energy necessitated to choose as it does, and not otherwise, or is it free in its choices? We affirm the latter, Necessitarians affirm the former.

Those who affirm that the will-energy is necessitated in all its choices, consist of two main classes:—

*First*, There are those who, according to their canons of physical science, deny all contingency or liberty in acts of the will-energy, and assert that, in all its acts, it is subject to the necessities of causation. Expressly under-

taking to interpret the phenomena of mind in terms of matter, their great principle in interpreting all mental and material phenomena is the unbroken continuity of force. The last sequent in every series of changes is, accordingly, the quantitative equivalent of the force expended by the last causal antecedent. Changes in matter and mind are alike mere counters for the quantity and quality of force transmitted from one link to another in an eternal chain. Human choice is, therefore, the last sequent of the last antecedent molecular movement of the universe in the direction of the brain and mind.<sup>1</sup> Adhering to their canons of physical science, these scientists consistently deny all proper responsibility in man, and regard him at once in body, and mind, and character, as the evolved product of the interminable past. They, indeed, say a man is free when he can do as he pleases or chooses. But they also at once say, that this admission of freedom raises the question of the origin of his pleasing or choosing. This origin of his pleasing or choosing, they consistently declare,

<sup>1</sup> See Maudsley's *Physiology of Mind*, chap. vii. His definition of liberty and Edwards', and his general approval of Edwardian theory is, to say the least of it, a note of warning to all theological Necessitarians.

is necessarily determined by his organism and its antecedents and environments. Their ethics of man consequently deny to him all proper moral responsibility, and so place him and all his acts on the plane of material good or evil, so that his conduct is simply useful or injurious, like food or poison, and is worthy of praise or blame only as they are.

We have already seen that this dynamic theory of all mental phenomena is expressly contradicted by the facts of human consciousness, and the moral judgments of the race. Scientists themselves confess that their canons of physical science utterly break down when consciousness emerges, and that all molecular movements fail to account for its essential contents, and especially, fail to account for the origin within, and egress from consciousness of movements in the organism. To them this is an unsolved and insoluble mystery. Their scientific theory excludes the most notorious facts in the universe contained in the self-conscious man himself. Like tailors, they diligently busy themselves with the organism and its environments, but have nothing to say of the inner man himself—a free responsible agent conditioned, yet not absolutely necessitated, by the environing universe.



*Second*, Theological and ethical Necessitarians, while affirming the necessitation of the will-energy in all its volitions, strongly assert the freedom and responsibility of man. They, indeed, speak in terms of mind, and not, as the scientists do, in terms of matter, yet of both classes the essential principle is one and the same. Both affirm that the human will is determinated by antecedent causes to choose as it does, and not otherwise. Their difference in terms does not affect the essential principle of causal necessitation common and essential to both. Theological Necessitarians maintain that the will-energy is determined by the strongest motive. Whether consisting in the last judgment of the practical intellect, or the last dictate of the understanding, or reasons, or prevailing inclinations and passions, or whatever is most agreeable at present, this strongest motive, considered as a proper cause, determinates the will-energy to choose as it does, so that all things considered it is impossible for it to choose otherwise. Thus the scientists and theological and ethical Necessitarians, by different methods, arrive at the same result, and affirm the causal necessitation of the will-energy in all its volitions by the strongest motive.

But while the scientists consistently deny all real freedom and proper responsibility to man, it is far otherwise with the theologian and moralist. They are constrained to affirm man's freedom, that they may have a rational basis for his responsibility. Here commence their immense difficulties.

What, then, is the liberty or freedom ascribed to man by theological and ethical Necessitarians? The definition of human freedom generally given by them, is to this effect—a man is fully and perfectly free or at liberty when he is free to do or not to do, to act or not to act, as he pleases, chooses, or wills. That he may be thus free, or in possession of liberty, they say that man requires to be exempt from a twofold necessity:—(1.) From an intrinsic necessity of nature, rendering choice a merely physical, brutish, blind necessity, as it is in irrational animals, and not choice arising out of a previous rational judgment; (2.) from an extrinsic necessity of coercion or compulsion, necessitating actions without our will, or against it, and therefore destroying all spontaneity.

According to Locke freedom consists in "our being able to act or not to act according as we shall choose or will." But we must

bear in mind that Locke held that this "choosing," or "willing," was necessarily and causally determined by the most pressing uneasiness, regarded by him as the strongest motive. His admission, that the mind has power to suspend the execution and satisfaction of its desires, and that this power of suspension, till further inquiry is made, "is the source of all liberty," gives no real liberty after all. For to will or choose the suspension of action, requires to be determined by the greatest uneasiness or strongest motive, as well as all other wills and choices. This source of all liberty is accordingly as much under the sway of a causal necessitation as any other choice or act. Hence, in his formal definition of liberty, he places it in our ability to act "*as we shall choose or will.*"

Proceeding on the same lines as those of his Necessitarian theological predecessors, and also of Locke, Edwards describes liberty as follows: "The plain and obvious meaning of the words *freedom and liberty* in common speech, is *power, opportunity, or advantage that any one has to do as he pleases*, or, in other words, his being free from hindrance or impediment in the way of doing or conducting in any respect as he wills." The opposite of liberty, he says, con-

sists in "a person being hindered or unable to conduct in any respect as he will, or being necessitated to do otherwise." Let the man come by his will or choice how he may, Edwards asserts that "the man is fully and perfectly free according to the common and primary notion of freedom," when he is free "*to do as he pleases.*"<sup>1</sup>

It is evident from what has been said, that scientists and theological Necessitarians agree in their definition of human freedom or liberty. Both restrict man's freedom to his being free, or able, to act or not to act *as he pleases, wills, or chooses.* This Necessitarian idea we regard as false, and as not containing any true freedom to man. In proof of this we submit the following reasons:—

(1.) This Necessitarian theory of freedom limits all human freedom to the man's being free and able to do or not to do, to act or not to act, *as he chooses, wills, or pleases.* The choosing, willing, pleasing, are assumed to exist already, and then, if nothing prevents, or renders me unable to do as *I have chosen*, I am fully and perfectly free. The sphere of freedom is therefore in what comes after, what lies beyond, choosing, willing, or pleasing. Having willed,

<sup>1</sup> See Part I., § 5, of his *Inquiry*.

chosen, or pleased to write these words, I am fully and perfectly free when nothing prevents or hinders me from so doing. But when I have willed, chosen, or been pleased to write these words, I am not free to write them when I have no pen, no ink, no paper, no eyesight, and paralysis in my right hand. The freedom according to this theory is freedom in what comes after choosing and willing, what is in the external material movements of my organism and its environments. Freedom in subsequent exterior movements as results or effects of choices, willings, or pleasings, never touches the real point at issue, concerning the freedom of the will-energy. The real question is not, am I free to act, or not to act in spheres exterior and posterior to choice? but it is, am I free in the *anterior choosing, willing, or volition itself*, as the cause of the resultant movements in mind, body, and external things? To tell me that I am free to do *as I choose*, is to tell me nothing. The vital point of the whole question is this, am I the man free to choose, or not to choose, and so be free not merely in the sequents,—deed and action, but also in the originant antecedents,—choices or volitions?

(2.) Though the centrally vital point in

question is freedom in the choosing, willing, or volition itself, yet the theory of freedom we are considering expressly excludes all consideration of how a man comes to have his choices, or is best pleased with a thing. The theory restricts freedom to the results of choice. This Edwards clearly saw and as clearly states. "But one thing more," he says, "I would observe concerning what is vulgarly called liberty, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, *is all that is meant by it*, without taking into the meaning of the word anything *of the cause or original* of that choice, or at all considering how the person came to have such a volition." He says again, "Let the person come by his volition or choice how he will, yet if he is able, and there is nothing in his way to hinder his pursuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free according to the primary and common notion of freedom."<sup>1</sup> Thus this theory accounts for freedom only in what takes place after the original choice or volition, but excludes volition itself from the sphere of freedom altogether. But this view utterly fails to meet all the facts of the

<sup>1</sup> Part I., § 5.

case. For very often a man is not free to *do* as he chooses or wills, but is prevented, and effectually hindered from doing it, or putting it into overt acts; and yet it is in the very choice itself that the essence of the man's character is found, and for which he is as much responsible before God and man, as he would have been if his choice unhindered had been carried out in overt deeds or acts. The man wills or chooses to assassinate his unsuspecting victim, but is hindered, had no freedom to do as he chose, willed, &c., yet he is as guilty as if he had done it. Injury to his victim alone was prevented. Or the man chooses or wills by deeds of valorous heroism to save his friend's endangered honour or life, but he is hindered, prevented, or unable to do as he willed or chose. But his merit is as great as if his choice had been carried out in deeds or acts. The benefits of his friend alone was prevented, and not his moral goodness. The real sphere of freedom, therefore, lies in the region of choice, which is antecedent in the inner processes of thought, to doing in the outer movements of the organism. But this source and centre of all freedom to man, is by this Necessitarian theory formally excluded. The definition of freedom given

by this theory is misleading and sophistical. It gains the assent because each man's consciousness supplies the suppressed fact of conscious freedom in the very act of choosing. But this irrepressible concession of consciousness, secretly, yea furtively assumed, is nevertheless openly and persistently denied by a clever misrepresentation of the truth which convicts the theory of falsehood.

(3.) The theory before us is based on the psychological error which confounds the will-energy and its volitions with the emotive-energy and its emotions. As we have already seen the emotive-energy, in all its likes and dislikes, desires and aversions, and feelings of the most agreeable or the contrary, is determinated necessarily by the objects presented to it. It is causally necessitated in all its emotional states, and therefore has no intrinsic freedom. Identifying the will-energy and its volitions with the emotive-energy and its emotions, Necessitarians affirm that the strongest desire and choice, the most agreeable and choice, are the same, and cannot be separated, and both alike are causally necessitated by their objects. Their only possible account of liberty or freedom very naturally excludes all reference to choice or volition. Freedom is possible only



at steps subsequent to this fixed and necessitated point of choice.

But this is to confound two things which are entirely distinct, and it is here we find the great and the primary falsehood of the whole theory. The will-energy is not emotional in its states, and is not determinated by so-called motives or emotions according to physical and mechanical analogies; but is the causal energy determinating the *action* of the mind relative to the objects and ends contained in the thought and emotive energies. These emotions or motives so-called are not the causes from which volitions originate, but are simply the objects, ends, or final causes on which the will-energy determinates its actions and the relations which it shall sustain to all such judgments, reasons, and emotions, as motives so-called. These logical and emotional states are merely the directive aims, ends, or objects of volitions, which are determinated by the will-energy itself as the only cause.

Moreover, the statement that we are fully and perfectly free when we are able to act or not to act *as we please, or choose, or will*, is not simple, but complex. It describes an action, and the rule of action. The act is according to the choice, and so differs, for

otherwise it would be a mere tautology, equivalent to saying, "to act as we act." But if the act and the choice really differ, so that the one is *as, or according to* the other, then the choice is, according to the theory, necessitated; and the acts which are free, are mere movements in the organism and mental processes.

(4.) It accordingly follows as a necessary consequence that this theory gives no real freedom to man. It maintains that his choices are determined by the strongest motive, and that in no case is it possible for them to be otherwise. It then excludes all consideration of how a man comes to have such choices, and then says that he is fully and perfectly free when he is able to act as he chooses; that is, when nothing hinders or prevents him from carrying out these extant choices. Now it must be kept in mind here, that these choices are the terminal points of self-control in consciousness. All other and further changes or "*acts as we have chosen,*" are found in the constitutional operations of the mind, and in the nervous and muscular movements of the organism, and in the external world. The freedom affirmed by the theory exists only in what comes after choice, and not in the self-

conscious man himself as choosing. But this only gives to man a freedom in common with all material and animal changes. On the same principle, a stone once in motion, no matter how it comes to have such a motion, is fully and perfectly free when nothing hinders its movements. So also, without considering how the animal comes to have its strongest likes, desires, or choices, it is fully and perfectly free when nothing prevents it from acting as it pleases, likes best, or chooses. In the man, the stone, and the animal alike, the sphere of freedom is restricted to what is external to themselves, and are alike without any freedom either to move or to do otherwise. They are all free only in the sense that their movements necessitated by one set of antecedent causes are not hindered or prevented by another set of subsequent causes. They are all, stone, animal, man, merely an arena on which causal athletes contend, and the strongest always prevail.

But if this is the real state of the case, why should man be consciously free *to choose*, even when not free *to do as* he chooses? And why should he be responsible at once for his choices, and his nervous, muscular acts, and their effects in the exterior world, while stones and animals

are not? The common judgment of man declares that there is an essential difference between the freedom of a stone in its unhindered motion, or of an animal in its unhindered acting as it pleases, and the freedom of man doing as he pleases or chooses. What is the basis of this universal practical judgment? It is, that man has freedom in the interior sphere of choice itself, and not merely in the spheres exterior to the will-energy and its volitions. It is this freedom in volition itself as the originant cause of new movements in the mental operations, and in the organism and external world, which differentiates man's choices and actions from stones free to fall, and animals free to act as they please. External, unhindered freedom is not, and cannot be inner personal freedom of the man himself. The one denotes the condition and relation of the external things, the latter denotes the will or self-energy determining its action and relations in agreement or non-agreement with its environments. If this is denied, as it is, by the theory, then man has no freedom but such as is common to stones in motion, and animals in their pursuit of what is most agreeable to their instincts and passions.

## CHAPTER XI.

FREEDOM OF WILL AND NECESSITY, EXTRINSIC  
AND INTRINSIC.

It is admitted by Necessitarians that these two forms of necessity are fatal to all true liberty.

(1.) By extrinsic necessity, coercion, or compulsion is meant, either a man's being forced or compelled to act against his will, or his being restrained from doing according to his will, by some external force or cause, which, endeavour as he will, he is unable to resist or control. He cannot do as he wills or chooses, and is therefore not free. It is enough for us to observe respecting this extrinsic necessity of coercion or compulsion, that it belongs to the external sphere of things, in which the theory places the whole of human freedom, and as the express negation of that freedom entirely destroys it. But it is self-evident that this necessity of coercion in the exterior spheres, leaves untouched the primary question of freedom in

the will-energy to determinate its choices, whether they can be carried out or not. The liberty and the necessity are both outside of choice, and are found only in the consequent mental and molecular movements, which may or may not be successful or be hindered according as means, opportunities, are present or absent independently of choices. But this leaves untouched the freedom of the will-energy and its choices. A thief choosing to steal may, under the necessities of coercion or compulsion, be forced not to steal. But this restraint as to outward acts, leaves intact his freedom of choosing to steal, means and opportunities permitting. Personal freedom of choice is not a question of outward circumstances. Man is morally a thief if he chooses to steal, though he never gets the chance *to do* as he chooses. External liberty and necessity consisting in the means, opportunities of exerting our choices, are totally distinct from the liberty and necessity within the consciousness itself in the matter of choices. But there is by Necessitarians a perpetual confusion of subjective and objective liberty and necessity in these discussions.

(2.) By intrinsic necessity is meant a necessity which arises from the constitu-

tion or nature of the thing itself, and excludes spontaneity, or voluntariness of action, action of one's own accord. Thus by an intrinsic necessity of nature, the sun shines and gives forth light and heat, but never darkness and cold. So also, by an intrinsic necessity of nature, animals having no rational or moral faculty, but having only brute instincts and passions, are by an inward necessity compelled or impelled to act as they do, and have no freedom to act otherwise, no spontaneity. But this distinction, on which so great stress is laid, is invalid, and leaves the theory subject to manifest contradictions and absurdities.

For, granting that by an intrinsic necessity of nature the sun shines, giving light and heat, and cannot do otherwise, and is, therefore, not responsible, the same must be true of the mind of man and all its phenomena. For, according to the theory, by the very nature and constitution of things, objects as presented or represented to the thought-energy necessarily determinate the perceptions and judgments, which in their turn determinate all the pains and pleasures, likes, dislikes, desires, aversions, and, in short, all emotions in the emotive-energy; and then the strongest emotions, taken as the strongest motives,

determinate the volitions and nolitions, which finally determinate all overt acts, if nothing more powerful prevents. Thus the sun and the mind, by an intrinsic necessity of their respective natures, are necessarily determinated in every step and stage of their phenomena. Different, indeed, in their nature and constitution, they have the one and selfsame principle of necessary causation determinating all acts and phenomena. Yet the theory says that man is free and responsible, while the sun is not, though both alike *in rerum natura* are necessitated to be just as they are, and do just as they do, and not otherwise. It therefore follows that either this theory is contradictory and absurd, or that the sun and the man are, or are not, alike free and responsible.

There is, however, a greater similarity between man and animals, from which the absurdity of the theory may be made more manifest. It is said that animals, being destitute of reason and a moral faculty, by an intrinsic necessity of nature are impelled or compelled to act according to their strongest desire or appetite. Be it so ; but if so, in what respect does man's freedom and essential principle of conduct differ from theirs ? It



may be said that man's nature is larger and more excellent than theirs. He has reason, which they have not; he has social, æsthetic affections and pleasures, which they have not; and he has, in short, a moral faculty, which they have not. But, freely granting all that, the real question is not the quantity or quality of man's nature, in excess of mere animals, it is the unity of the principle of action in both cases. The theory asserts strongly that man in terms of his nature is causally necessitated to choose and to act as he does, and not otherwise, just as animals are; for he acts of choice, and he must choose as he does; and yet it is asserted that man is exempt from an intrinsic necessity of nature, while in every act he is subject to it, so that there is a flat contradiction.

In further proof of this, let us take an illustrative example. Certain objects are presented to the perceptions, instincts, passions, and appetites of an animal, say corn to a horse, or a bone to a hungry dog. These objects excite the feeling of the most agreeable in the animal, and this feeling, if not prevented by some external hindrance, by an inward necessity of nature compels the animal to the acts necessary to the possession and

enjoyment of what seems the most agreeable at the time. Now let us take the case of a man with his larger nature—animal instincts, passions, appetites, human reason, social, æsthetic, moral affections, dispositions, and inclinations—a quantity and quality of nature vastly different from the animal no doubt. But does the principle of action, of phenomena in man's nature, differ from that of the animal nature, or is it the same? According to the Necessitarian theory it is the same. Certain objects, when presented to man's thought-energy, necessarily determinate his perceptions, reasons, and final judgments, or last dictates of the understanding, which, in turn, necessarily determinate in the emotive-energy all likes, dislikes, desires, aversions, inclinations and disinclinations; the strongest of which emotions constitute the strongest motives, which again in their turn necessarily determinate the choices in the will-energy, which choices finally determinate man's acts and conduct, and further movements in mind and body, to be as they are and not otherwise. It is thus manifest that, as in the animal, so also in the man, every step and stage of thought, feeling, choice, and action, are by an intrinsic necessity of nature causally necessitated to

be just as they are. The quantity and quality of man's nature differ from those of the animal. The steps in the process may be more numerous in the one than they are in the other. But in both alike there is in principle the same intrinsic necessity of nature, causally necessitating all thoughts, feelings, choices, acts, internal and external, to be as they are, and not otherwise. The theory, on the one hand, asserts that man is exempt from "an intrinsic necessity of nature;" and yet on the other, asserts an intrinsic necessity of nature in the causal determination of every thought, feeling, choice, and overt action; and, therefore, asserts a manifest absurdity and contradiction, for it is equivalent to saying that a man is free and not free in the same things and times. Moreover, on what rational grounds can we affirm the responsibility of man and the non-responsibility of animals, since both alike are subject to the same intrinsic necessity of nature and conduct?

Scientists, according to their canons, may say, The theological Necessitarians are right in their doctrine of necessity, internal and external, but both you and they are wrong in your ideas of human responsibility. Without breach of continuity of force, man is

necessitated by his environments in perceptions, judgments, feelings, choices, actions, in common with stones and animals. All mental phenomena are only a complicated psychology, psychology only complicated physiology, physiology only complicated chemistry, chemistry only complicated mechanics, mechanics only complicated dynamics, and dynamics only force somehow generated by incandescent molecules in the sun; and therefore all mental phenomena are only sunbeams transformed, without breach of continuity, and for which man is as little really responsible as he is for the celestial radiant heat from which he and his phenomena primarily spring.

To scientists speaking according to their canons of physical science, I reply, Your theory utterly fails in the presence of the fact of consciousness in general, which is, confessedly, a breach of continuity your theory cannot bridge. It also fails in the presence of the particular fact of conscious freedom of choice or action breaking up, setting aside, or deflecting into new channels, the continuity of force, a freedom no doubt manifoldly conditioned and limited, yet real within its own sphere. Even as a provisional, or a working hypothesis, no theory can be accepted which contradicts

or ignores whole classes of innumerable facts, facts of consciousness, facts of freedom of choice in every sane mind, facts of responsibility embodied in the social and moral governments of all peoples, civilised and barbarous. Man's nature and conduct are immensely too large to be adequately measured by canons of physical science, and the facts of his consciousness far transcend attempted interpretations by means of molecular movements, whether in the brain or the kosmos.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### FREEDOM OF WILL AND NECESSITY, VULGAR AND PHILOSOPHICAL.

THE theory that a man is fully and perfectly free when he is able to do as he pleases or wills, while *necessitated to please and will*, gains nothing for its support from the distinction made between what is called vulgar and philosophical necessity.

In its common or vulgar sense, it is admitted that necessity destroys and excludes all freedom. As defined by theological Necessitarians,

vulgar necessity is identical with what they call necessity of coercion or compulsion. In the original and proper sense of the word, that is necessary to us which is, or will be notwithstanding all supposable opposition or effort on our part to the contrary. All such necessity of course excludes and destroys freedom.

Now the one thing to be observed here is, that this sphere of necessity, in its common or vulgar sense, is the same as the necessity of coercion or compulsion. It is some external hindrance or opposition, or cause, which renders our efforts inoperative and vain. In this sense, therefore, the word necessity is used as denoting a *causal* necessity. As causes on the one side exerting our energy, we are met and overcome by causes on the other side, and such necessity of causation takes away all freedom. In all questions concerning human liberty or freedom, the term necessity, as used in common speech, is restricted to the sphere of causes, whether these causes are internal or external. In this common sense, necessity is affirmed of that cause which, in the conflict of causes, is the strongest, and prevails in its effect, notwithstanding all supposable opposition from other causes. Such a cause has

necessity in it, because it has necessitation in it, absolutely excluding all freedom in other causes in the case supposed.

But since the common judgments and speech of men restrict the term necessity to causes and their operations, it follows, according to this theory, that there is an absolute universal necessity and necessitation both within and around the human mind, and not even the vestige or shadow of freedom remains. For the theory affirms, without ceasing, that all final judgments of the understanding are causally and necessarily determinated by their objects; that these judgments in the same necessary manner determinate all feelings of likes, dislikes, desires, aversions; that these in turn, as constituting the strongest motive, causally and necessarily determinate all choices or volitions in the will, which choices or volitions are the final phenomena of consciousness. From sensation all through the different stages of mental change to final choices, volitions, from the first to the last stage of consciousness, all is subject to the strongest cause prevailing; so that there is a causal necessity and necessitation determinating all the faculties and their phenomena, absolutely excluding all liberty.

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As within the mind itself, so also externally to it, all liberty is excluded by the theory. For in this sphere of causation external to the mind, the strongest cause prevails, notwithstanding all opposition. This external sphere is a sphere beyond our consciousness, beyond our power—all is mere machinery, mechanics, and dynamics of material causes in their manifold conflicts, in which the strongest cause invincibly prevails. Yet it is in this sphere, external to consciousness and subsequent to volition, the theory places all the freedom possible to man. But this is only a freedom in the means, opportunities, and general machinery of his environments. The Necessitarian theory says a man is fully and perfectly free when he can do or act as he chooses, while denying that he is free to choose. But to be honest the theory ought first of all to tell the unsuspecting man that he is necessitated to choose, and then to do as he chooses, and that he is free only in the spheres exterior to choice in means, opportunities, and machinery. There is no freedom in him at all. Thus liberty and necessity in the common speech and judgments of men absolutely exclude each other, and when affirmed of the same things, in the same sense, are express contra-



dictions, for they are applied to *causes and causation as free, or necessary*.

But the term necessity is used by theological Necessitarians in a *metaphysical or philosophical* sense,—a sense totally different from what it has in the common speech and judgments of men. This, to say the least of it, does not look promising, for it is a confession on the part of our opponents that their theory cannot be reconciled with the common speech and judgments of mankind. Moreover, this use of the term, as differing from its vulgar sense, is sure to lead to endless confusions and sophisms, in which it may seem to be proved that man is subject to necessity in the very things and at the very instant he is conscious of freedom. Yea, such has been the fact in thousands of cases, where men have said in substance to Necessitarians, "Gentlemen, we cannot answer your arguments that we are subject to an absolute necessity, and yet we know that we are free and responsible agents."

What, then, is this metaphysical or philosophical necessity which is said to be consistent with man's freedom or liberty? It must denote either:—

(1.) A necessity which is immanent in the nature of things, which never began to be,

never changes, and transcends all causes and their operations in the universe. But when the term necessity is used in this sense, it has, and can have, no reference to the will-energy as a cause, and volitions or acts as effects, or—

(2.) A necessity in rational thought, the opposite of which is unthinkable, according to the logical law or principle of contradiction. It is in this sense Edwards uses the term, when he affirms that necessity is consistent with liberty. He at large explains that philosophical or metaphysical necessity consists in the full and fixed connection between the subject and the predicate of a proposition which affirms something to be true. That, however, amounts simply to a necessity in rational thought, the thought-energy exercised on necessary truths or historic facts, as expressed in true propositions, the opposite of which would be a contradiction. But what has this purely intellectual, logical, or rational necessity involved in a true proposition, to do with either the liberty or necessity of the will as the cause of its volitions? Philosophical necessity, as defined by Edwards and others, amounts to only a pure and simple affirmation or negation of the intelligence that

a thing is or is not. I again ask, what has that to do with the fact that my will is free, or is not free to choose? That my will-energy *is* the free cause, or my will-energy *is not* the free cause of volitions, are propositions one of which is necessarily true; but the necessity contained in the true proposition leaves my will-energy as it is, free or not free. In such a proposition, the full and fixed connection of the terms are a necessity only in rational thought, and is purely logical. Hence, leaving out of sight for the present *a priori* judgments and propositions expressing them, as irrelevant to our question, let us take propositions which refer to *facts, things done* through the operations of causes. The rational or logical faculty does not constitute or cause the full and fixed connection of the terms in the proposition, it only recognises and declares what it finds. But this necessity in the logical faculty imposes no necessity on the causes which constitute the connection between the terms of the true proposition in the region of facts, things done. That I wrote the preceding sentences, that I now write these words, are propositions whose terms have a full and fixed connection, and are necessarily and eternally true; that I was and am consciously

free to choose and to write or not is, according to conscious fact, a true proposition, and necessarily and eternally true; but this necessity of truth to the logical faculty imposes no causal necessity on the will-energy as the free cause, constituting the connection between the terms. But then this necessarily true proposition is true just because it affirms my freedom of will-energy. This philosophical necessity, of which so much has been said, and the test of which is the logical principle of contradiction, is utterly irrelevant and absurd. Things done by causes necessarily determinated to the only unit of action possible, and things done by our wills as undeterminated causes, free to choose from a plurality of actions possible, are known and expressed by propositions necessarily true, the necessary as necessary and the free as free. In the region of fact, the true thought expressed by a true proposition, is never the cause of the subject matter it contains. The proposition only registers in terms the thought of what is, or is not, and is at best only the subjective logical form of objective realities.

This formal, logical, subjective necessity in thought by a false illation, mischievous and misleading, is used in an objective causal sense,

at least from the necessity in thought there is inferred a causal necessity in will-energy and its choices. It is said, for example, that a man must necessarily walk or not, and, therefore, whichever he does, he does it necessarily. He cannot do both at the same time, but must do one. Whether he walks or not, he does it of necessity. The necessity here is the logical, formal *subjective necessity of thinking* that the man walks, or does not walk, as the only possible alternatives. But the *objective fact, thing done by the man*, is the free choice of one of the alternatives. The subjective necessity of *thinking* is one thing, and the freedom of the man in *choosing* to walk or not is quite another. In this case, the necessity is the logical, subjective necessity of *thinking* "either or," but the freedom in the case is freedom of *doing* "either or." The fact is that the thought-energy never of itself can, and never does, change the full and fixed connection of the terms in a true proposition. Its creed or formula consists in "whatever is, is, or whatever is not, is not." But the will-energy, as mental cause, is perpetually changing, negating the affirmative and affirming the negative propositions, so that what was not true of a thing yesterday becomes

true of it to-day, and what is true to-day will not be true to-morrow. The logical faculty and its true propositions is necessarily determined *by what is or is not*; the executive faculty is free to do or not, to choose or not in the wide field of the possible, and cause *new facts*, things done, constituting new connections between subjects and predicates.

The same principle applies to what are called propositions containing relative, hypothetical, or antecedent necessity. If the term necessity is used in its logical, formal sense, then it is irrelevant to the question before us. But if it is used in a causal sense, as referring to the will-energy, then the facts of freedom exclude all such necessities, and can, and do, in fact, change and transmute them in manifold ways.

The same thing is true concerning the distinction of philosophical necessity into natural and moral necessity. As formerly defined, philosophical necessity is purely logical, and consists in the full and fixed connection of the terms in a true proposition. But this same necessity, when described as *natural*, becomes *objective* or *causal*, something in the nature and relations of the forces of nature. Natural philosophical necessity is described as the necessity men are under

through the force of natural *causes*. Thus Edwards leaps from a merely subjective, formal, logical necessity of rational thought, to an objective causal necessity in the forces of nature; but he fails, for the gulf is impassable. The logical necessity of affirming that a thing is as it is and not otherwise, is as valid if I say, "I am a free cause of choice," if it is the fact, as when I say, I am not a free cause of choice, if that is the fact. The necessity of affirmation or negation in a true proposition, takes things as they are, never makes them what they are, whether free or necessary. The question in this discussion is not, is a true proposition necessarily true? but it is, whether is it true that I am, or am not a free cause of choice? The proposition affirming the truth is no doubt philosophically, metaphysically, and necessarily true, but its truth does not constitute me either free or not free, it only formally declares me to be what I am in fact. Edwards thus confounds a merely subjective, logical necessity, with an objective causal necessity, misleading his readers, and involving himself in endless sophisms and contradictions.

But the ambiguities and confusions of Edwards' use of the term necessity in its philoso-

phical sense, as he says he uses it, appear more distinctly in his account of moral necessity. Passing over necessity as denoting moral obligation, obligation in point of interest, ground of moral evidence, as distinguished from absolute necessity as the foundation of infallible certainty, we come finally to the sense in which he uses the term in this discussion. He says, "Sometimes by moral necessity is meant that necessity of connection and consequence which arises from such *moral causes* as the strength of inclinations and motives, and the connection which there is, in many cases, between these and such certain volitions and actions."<sup>1</sup>

Now here again he passes at a bound from his philosophical necessity in a true proposition to *moral* causes, or motives causally determining volitions or choices. That is to say, the natural causes of effects in the region of the will, for moral causes are only causes of a specific kind, included in natural causes. His definition of necessity, which is purely subjective, logical, and formal in thought, is at once transferred to a necessity in moral causes determining volitions as moral effects. The subjective necessity of thought is con-

<sup>1</sup> *Inq.*, P. 1, § 4.



nected with an objective necessity of cause in the nature of things; so that whatever is true in thought, is absolutely necessary in causation and the nature of things. For Edwards maintains that moral necessity is as absolute as natural necessity. The difference is only in the "terms connected," not in "the nature of the connection." But when we keep clearly before our mind, that necessities in thought do not impose any necessity of causation on things, but rest on what things are, irrespective of our thoughts, we escape the confusions of Edwards' arguments, and always come back to the question of fact, in consciousness,—Am I a free cause, or am I not, in the *origination of choice*, and not merely in *doing as I choose*? Then, yes or no is necessarily true.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### FREEDOM OF WILL AND CERTAINTY.

ANOTHER source of confusion in this discussion arises from the use of the word *certainty* as denoting an *objective causal necessity* or necessitation in things themselves. Thus Edwards

says, "Metaphysical or philosophical necessity is nothing different from their certainty. I speak not now *of the certainty of knowledge*, but the certainty that is in things themselves, which is the foundation of the certainty of the knowledge of them, or that wherein lies the ground of the infallibility of the proposition which affirms them." Here the "certainty that is in things themselves" is distinguished from certainty of knowledge, and is the ground of it, and the infallible propositions affirming such things. Well, be it so; this certainty in things themselves is neither certainty of knowledge, nor philosophical necessity, consisting in the full and fixed connection of the terms in a true proposition, but *the ground of both "in things themselves."* That is, Edwards first defines philosophical necessity as subjective, logical, rational affirmation or negation in a true proposition, and as nothing different from "certainty," but at once says, "not the certainty of knowledge." What is this but expressly to deny his own definition of philosophical necessity? For what is a true proposition, but a certainty of knowledge, affirming or denying a full fixed connection between subject and predicate? Hence the confusions and ambiguities imported when Edwards passes

from the subjective, logical necessity contained in a true proposition to what he calls the certainty *in things themselves as ground of the certainties in thought or knowledge*. By certainty in things themselves, he must mean the objective causal necessities determinating the things to be as they are in all their operations and phenomena. He thus confounds certainties of thought with objective causal necessities in things themselves. This use of the term "certainty," as denoting *something in things themselves* distinct from knowledge, is a solecism. Whether things in themselves are free, or necessitated causes, is perfectly distinct from certainty respecting them. For I am as certain that some things are free, as I am that other things are necessary causes. Certainty deals simply with what is, whether it is free or necessary. The term "*certainty*" and its cognates always denote a state or condition of the mind knowing, and never a state, condition, or quality in the object known. When I say, "I certainly saw, or I am certain I saw you walking past my window yesterday," I simply mean I know that fact clearly, distinctly, definitely, and have no doubt about it. Or if I say, "You certainly walked past my window yesterday," I mean you certainly to

my mind or thought did so. If I say, "I have the highest possible certainty that you did so," I do not mean anything in your legs, but the clear, distinct knowledge or certainty in my mind. Whether you were a mere automaton causally necessitated to walk, as the carriage wheel was to revolve passing at the same time, or a free man freely causing your legs to move, may be uncertain, but it is an uncertainty to my mind, not anything in your legs and you. Finally, when a thing is said to be certain, or have certainty in itself, what is meant is, that the thing is clearly, distinctly manifested, and known to me or to some one else. There is no certainty in it, just because there is no definite knowledge in it. The question is not, is there certainty in thought, clear, distinct, infallible knowledge, but it is, what is certain to thought in this thing? Is it a free unnecessitated cause, or is it not? In either case there is certainty in thought of the fact, that the cause is free or necessitated.

Theological Necessitarians take this word certainty, which means clear distinct knowledge in the mind, and by verbal sleight of hand illicitly convert it into an objective causal necessitation of the connection established between the terms of a proposition. While

their definition is that philosophical necessity and certainty are the same, and denote the full and fixed connection of the terms in a true proposition, and is therefore purely subjective, logical, formal, their meaning and use of the term, as a certainty in things themselves, is objective and causal, denoting necessity and necessitation in the things. But this is at once a solecism and an ambiguity. For the term "certainty" and all its cognates can be used as fully of what is free as of what is necessary. I am certain that I am free at this moment to write, or not to write, these words, go on writing, or cease, and go a walk. That fact is well, clearly, without doubt known, or certain to me. I am certain, or clearly know, that I have causal freedom in this matter. So, on the other hand, I know or am certain, that this pen, ink, and paper, are not free, are causally necessitated at this moment to unite with my organic apparatus in forming these letters, a performance involving, for aught I know, myriads of necessitated causes and consequents; and all because I am certain that I, as a free cause, stand at the beginning of the whole series, freely determinating the choice or volition to write. My certainty, your certainty, all the certainty in the universe, imposes

neither necessity nor freedom on things known; it is simply the certainty or clear definite knowledge, that things are what they are, whether free causes or necessary causes of their phenomena.

If I am now asked, How can there be certainty of knowledge concerning an uncertain thing? I answer, In that case all that can be meant is that I clearly know that I do not know that thing, I am sure and certain that thing is not clearly, distinctly defined to my thought—it is uncertain to me, unknown to me, and I clearly know or am certain of that. If it is again asked, How can we be certain of a thing if it is free, and may or may not be? I answer, I am certain that it is free, and may or may not be, for it would be contradictory to say it was free, and yet must be. If it is said again, You cannot have any certainty of the future conduct of a free cause, such as the will-energy; I answer, certainly not, if you mean “infallible foreknowledge” of what human free-wills will do, or how they will act in given circumstances. But do you know of *any man* who has such infallible certainty about future human volitions? There is no such certainty to your mind, or the mind of any man. Future volitions are

uncertain just because they are not clearly known, and even Necessitarians find themselves as uncertain as the advocates of freedom concerning human volition.

The future volitions of the will-energy as a free cause are in themselves "uncertain"—that is, "unknown" to finite minds, and their opposites supposable, just because they are exempt from all causal necessity. But the future phenomena of necessary and necessitated causes are certain—that is, are known, and their opposites, according to the constitution of things, not supposable, just because they have no causal freedom. Still the propositions affirming the freedom or the necessity in the cause, are necessarily true and infallibly certain in thought. In consciousness, I know or am certain that my will-energy is the free cause of choice or volition; but whether I am free to do as I choose, often depends on circumstances, which are causal necessities over which I have no power, no control. God's *certainly* of how all will-energies as free causes will choose or act, is another question, of which I will speak hereafter.

When, therefore, this theory says, that philosophical necessity, consisting in the full and fixed connection between the subject and

predicate of a true proposition, is the same thing as infallible certainty, it says what is indeed true in logical, rational thought; but it says nothing to the purpose in this discussion.

The question is not, What is subjectively true or false, certain or uncertain, in logical, rational thought; but whether in facts, things done, the causes fixing, constituting the connection of subjects and predicates, are free, or necessarily determinated causes? Our sole inquiry here is, What sort of causes originate and determine the connection of the terms in all propositions which formally express facts, things done—are they free causes, or are they not? Yes or No. Affirmation or negation is a philosophical necessity or certainty; but that same philosophical, formal, logical necessity will affirm freedom as readily as necessity, in the nature of the causes of facts, things done—affirm that the free causes are free, and the necessarily determinated causes are necessary.

From what has been advanced we think that the following conclusions are warranted:—

(1.) That, in the nature and constitution of things, liberty and necessity within the same limits absolutely exclude each other, for, as contradictories, where the one is, the other



cannot be. That is a philosophic necessity or certainty in thought.

(2.) That when both liberty and necessity exist in the same thing, it must be in different spheres and respects.

(3.) That when liberty and necessity thus coexist in the same thing, they must mutually limit and condition each other, and neither can be absolute or universal, but only relative.

(4.) That liberty and necessity coexist in man's nature and operations, limiting and conditioning each other, and, therefore, are not absolute, but only relative. Man's liberty or freedom is found only in the sphere of the will-energy as the free cause of choice, which, according to the laws of nature and our constitution, determinate mental and muscular phenomena in manifold ways.

But this causal liberty or freedom of the will-energy in determinating its volitions is limited and conditioned in many ways. There are limits to our freedom of will-energy in the causal necessities of the external world, of our organism, of our determinated perceptions, judgments, and rational thought, and of our emotions, of likes and dislikes, determinated by their objects. These separately and combined determinate the possibilities, objects,

means, and opportunities, aims and ends of choice, and thus limit our freedom. But the possibilities of choice left by the environing necessities measure and define the sphere of the freedom of will-energy. Accordingly, in virtue of the freedom of our will-energy, we lay hold of the determinated causes in nature, in our constitution, and originate new movements. These environing necessities, however, do not operate on our will as *causes of our choices*. Necessities in the nature of things, whether material or mental—things, or thoughts and feelings, are not *causal motives* of choice. For what has usually been called *motive*, is not something which moves or causes the will to choose. As we have seen, “motive,” relative to the will, really denotes not the objects as the causes *from which* choice and action of will originate, but the objects as ends *on which* the choice and action of the will-energy terminate—determinating the relations which shall subsist between the mind and such objects. Thus liberty and necessity mutually limit and condition each other, and give to man, in whom they meet, his unique position as a free responsible agent under the moral government of the universe.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## FREEDOM OF WILL AND DIVINE DECREES.

THE essential principle involved in the decrees of God, as held by Necessitarian theologians, is the same as that which appears in the theories of the universe held by physical scientists. Theologians speak in terms of mind, scientists speak in terms of matter; the one speaks in terms of thought and final causes, while the other speaks in terms of force and sequence. Theologians postulate the living personal eternal God; scientists grant only an impersonal, eternal universe as the original cause of all phenomena in so-called matter and mind. But amid these immensities of difference in their postulates, these theologians and scientists agree in the essential principle, that all time, and space-measured events, and processes whatsoever are necessarily determinated to be as they are, and not otherwise. The principle of causal necessitation without breach of continuity of force in quantitative equivalents is common to both. The method in which this principle is wrought out constitutes the only difference.

So also these theologians and fatalists agree as to the essential principle of absolute causal necessitation. The only difference is that, with the one, these necessities of all events come from the will of the personal God, while with the other they come from impersonal necessities in the nature of things. There is that difference, it is true; but the practical result is the same—absolute necessity. It is, however, with theologians of the Necessitarian school we have specially to deal. In their fidelity to the great verities of the evangelical faith, and in their loyalty of reverent worship of the most holy God, all esteem them very highly. Though we earnestly contend against their logical theory and its consequences, and the dishonour these throw upon God, we know that in their deepest hearts they abhor, and by their holy lives they protest against all impeachments of the wise, good, righteous, and holy character of God. Still, with all respect, we think their theory regarding God's decrees relative to moral agents is false and destructive to the very existence of morals and moral government, notwithstanding all they say to the contrary.

The decrees of God are not unfrequently spoken of by theologians as a unit—as all

comprehended in one great decree. When thus spoken of generically, the decrees are all embraced in God's "foreordination" of everything which takes place in time, or "whatever comes to pass." Under this generic universal decree are contained the specific decrees known by the terms "predestination," or "election and reprobation." The order of the decrees contained in the generic decree of universal foreordination has been keenly disputed by divines; these disputes constitute the well-known supralapsarian and sublapsarian controversies of the Calvinistic sects. But with these minor controversies we need not detain ourselves. The generic decree of universal foreordination ultimately reduces all such controversies to a mere fruitless logomachy; for whatever that order is, it is the order of necessitated antecedents and sequents, from everlasting to everlasting.

The consensus of Necessitarian theologians concerning the great trunk decree of God, may be stated in the well-known and well-received definition of the Westminster Confession, third chapter,—“God, from all eternity, did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.” The

saving clauses which are added, regarding God's being the author of sin, violence to the will of creatures, and liberty of second causes, leave untouched the dogma of universal, absolute ordination of "whatsoever comes to pass." For this decree ordaining all that takes place in time, is infallibly "executed" by God, carried out into facts in His creation and providence.

Now, we contend that this universal absolute foreordination by God of all things whatsoever, destroys all true freedom or liberty of choice and action in man. In proof of this, after what has already been said, let the following brief remarks suffice:—

(1.) There is no true liberty or freedom given to man when it is said that a man is fully and perfectly free when he *can do as he chooses*, for here the freedom is placed in the external sphere of *doing* after he has already chosen—it is only a freedom in the sense of external freedom of sequence. Nor is any true liberty given to man when it is said he is free to choose in the sense that he chooses "*sua sponte*," spontaneously, or of his own accord. For what is that choice as explained by our opponents, but a pleasant feeling of agreement, or a painful feeling

of disagreement, necessarily determinated by the strongest motives. True, no violence is done to the will as they speak; but by its very nature and constitution it is necessarily determinated by its proper causes—the strongest motives—just as other agents are determinated to act according to their nature by their proper stimuli or causes. Thus there is no true proper freedom to man in his will-energy in either choosing or doing as he chooses, according to this pretended scheme of liberty.

(2.) It therefore follows that since there is no freedom to the will in choosing, or doing as it chooses, it is subject to absolute necessity as determinated by the strongest motives, which in their turn are determinated by the necessities in the nature of the mind and its surroundings. But, then, this brings us ultimately to God, who has ordained or foreordained whatsoever comes to pass in time, and executes that decree infallibly.

(3.) It further follows that our wills and their volitions, as the objects of God's fixed unchangeable foreordination, are necessary with an absolute necessity to us, because all our volitions are contained in God's original decree. No volition of ours can be otherwise than it is, for whenever it occurs it must be the exact

expression of its original in the unchangeable decree of God. The good or the evil in our volitions and conduct are the good or the evil originally in the decree, and executed in time within our consciousness by God himself. Properly speaking, man's will and volition are God's will and volition in man, and there is nothing of fact finally in man which was not a decree originally in God. There is, therefore, on the principle of universal foreordination, no free volition whose proper first origin is in man. All human volitions and acts are decreed and causally executed by God himself. For the Divine decree either fixes and causally determinates each and every volition, or it does not. If God, as decreeing and executing His decrees, however circuitously, fixes and causally brings our volitions to pass, then He is their *cause* and their author, whether sins or virtues. They are God's volitions as phenomena in human consciousness, for which the praise or blame belongs solely to Him. But if God's will, as decreeing, does not fix, does not determine, does not causally necessitate our volitions, then our will-energy is free to choose or refuse; and the decree and its execution in time become nonentities. God's decrees are the original causes of their objects,



or they are not, and are therefore necessitating or useless, let men say what they will.

(4.) It may be said that it is granted that in some real sense God is the cause of whatever comes to pass, sinful acts included. But in decreeing, and in bringing the sinful acts of man to pass, it is only the acts and not the sin which is in them which He causes to exist. A man riding a lame horse is the cause of motion in the horse, but not of the halting step—that limp comes from a fault or defect in the horse itself. So God's decrees fix and determinate, and infallibly cause all our acts as acts, but not the sinfulness of them, which comes from some fault, defect, or limp in our nature. To all this we reply, that only shifts the knot farther back. Whence the limp of sinfulness in us? It was brought to pass somewhere and sometime, and it too was decreed by God, and executed by Him. The limp in the horse, and limp of sinfulness in us, are fixed and determined according to God's decree. It is said, the defect of nature which causes sin in us is inherited from Adam, in whom we sinned and became corrupt. Without dwelling on the similarity of this idea to the materialist's organic, traducian heredity of the race, let us grant that we got

our limping, defective nature from Adam. Where did Adam get his sin from? Did he originate it outside of the decree or within the decree of God? If within the decree, then God fixed it for him, and executed it in him to start with. God is its author, and Adam is only a recipient. Then, after the traducian method of an organic heredity, Adam gave his descendants the sinful limp he got from God. I know it is painful to theological Necessitarians to have such charges made, but it is the logical outcome of their dogmatic creed, however abhorrent to their practical faith and adoring love toward the most holy God. Let such theologians speak as they may, either we must affirm that the human will and its volitions are exempt from God's decrees causally determinating them to be as they are, or we must affirm that God's will eternally decreeing and executing its decrees in time, is the simple, sole cause of whatsoever comes to pass—sin and sinfulness included; and the created universe is only complicated machinery determinated in all its movements by God—the only Cause.

(5.) If it is said, God must have a purpose or plan, according to which He creates and governs the universe, and that this plan must

be so perfect as not to admit any mistake or failure, in part or in whole. To this all devout Theists will heartily assent. But the point at issue is not the existence of a most perfect plan, or generic purpose or decree relative to the Divine relations and governance of all things and events. The point is, does God's plan contain agents endowed with a free will-energy determinating its choices and actions for or against the objects which condition it, and therefore have always a plurality of action possible; or are all agents determinated to act as they do by their nature and environments, so that they have never more than a unit of action possible? In other words, does God's plan include moral agents and the government of them as free to choose for or against what are called strongest motives, as well as natural agents and natural government of them as necessitated in their nature and movements? We affirm that God's plan, embracing a system of moral government of moral free agents undetermined by motives or other cause, is infinitely grander and more glorious to God, than a plan whose essence is the mechanics of omnipotence.

(6.) From what has been said, it follows

that in the sphere of morals and moral government, God's causal decree or foreordination does not extend to the determinations of choice caused by the will-energy itself. God's decree or foreordination casually determining in due time what comes to pass, is limited to what God himself does as Creator and Governor. God's decrees are God's purposes concerning what He shall Himself do *absolutely* and *unconditionally*, in spite of all things conceivable to the contrary, and also what He shall do *relatively* and *conditionally* in the case of free agents as they obey or disobey His will. But in both cases God's decrees are strictly limited to His own action, whether that action is absolute and unconditional, as in physical things and their government, or relative and conditional, as in morals and the government of moral agents. God's decrees no doubt limit our freedom to a given sphere, a limited sphere it is true, but real and all important, and conterminous throughout with our responsibility.

What has been said applies, of course, to the specific decrees of God denoted by the terms predestination, election, reprobation, &c. The absolute, personal, unconditional destinating of some men and angels to life and some to

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death, and also to the means necessary thereto, renders all freedom of choice an absolute impossibility. For if that were the case these men and angels, by the casual will of Almighty God, in His eternal decree and infallible execution of it in time, are marshalled and marched to a fore-fixed destiny through fore-fixed conduct; and worst of all, if this dogma is true, these angels and men, subject to unalterable destiny, are all through deluded with the idea that they are free agents. But when it is seen that God's decrees regarding destiny are conditional, and that life or death depends on the obedience or disobedience of the free will-energy, conditioned, but not determinated, by God's authority, and by manifold means, opportunities, &c., then man's freedom and responsibility are conserved, God's honour and authority are established by the fact that human and angelic destiny is twofold in nature, answering to the twofold character arising out of free choices.

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## CHAPTER XV.

FREEDOM OF WILL AND DIVINE FORE-  
KNOWLEDGE.

THEOLOGICAL Necessitarians maintain that God's certain infallible foreknowledge involves or infers as much necessity as a decree, and argue that if God's foreknowledge is consistent with freedom, so is His decree of everything which comes to pass in time. For our part we grant that the foreknowledge of God is universal, certain, and infallible. This we think is not only an implicate of omniscience, but also is expressly taught in the Sacred Scriptures. We, however, deny that Divine foreknowledge involves or infers necessity in all the causes of future events.

(1.) For foreknowledge in God is simply and purely knowledge, and like all the knowledges of God is a state or condition of His intelligence. Now all knowledge, whether its objects are in time past, present, or future, is in itself immanent in the mind knowing, and never as knowledge is transient. It can be made known to other minds only by some act or thing done. But as knowledge pure

and simple it is subjective, and eternally immanent in God, and leaves the things known what they are and as they are in their intrinsic nature, things free as free, things necessary as necessary. In principle this is admitted by Necessitarians themselves, notwithstanding some collateral confusions.

(2.) But it may be said, if God foreknows certainly and infallibly that a given thing will be, then it *must be*, or God's foreknowledge of it is proved to be false, and if it *must be*, it is necessary. Granted; but "it must be," it is "necessary," in what sense? Clearly not "must be" or "necessary" in an objective causal sense, for we have seen that all knowledge is immanent in the mind knowing, and never as knowledge passes outward beyond the consciousness. The only sense, therefore, in which a thing foreknown "must be" or is "necessary" is a subjective logical sense, a "must be" or a "necessity" *in thought*. It is simply the logical rule of contradiction, according to which even God is not able to know and not to know the same thing. If He foreknows a thing certainly and infallibly, then it will be just as He knows it, otherwise He does not know it at all. But such necessity of perfect knowledge answering to the object

known, and the object known answering to the knowledge, involves, infers no necessity objective and causal in the nature of the thing known. It is as it is in its own nature and causal energies, free or necessary, whether it is known or unknown. If infallibly known of course it must be known as it is.

(3.) But it may be said, that the certainty of God's foreknowledge involves or infers as much certainty in the things themselves fore-known as if they were determinated by God's decrees. What do you mean by certainty in things themselves, or certainty in events? Do you mean objective necessity and necessitation causally determinated by God's omnipotence executing His decrees? If so, say so, and not speak of certainty in the things themselves when you mean causal necessitation; for notwithstanding the abuse of this term in these matters, *certainty* is purely and simply knowledge in the mind, and not some quality in the object. When we say that God foreknows that my future volitions are certain, or that there is certainty in them, we simply mean, that God foreknows that they will be done, or that there is certainty, or clear, distinct knowledge in His thought concerning them. Certainty, as we have already seen, is always



equivalent to clear, distinct, well-defined knowledge. When it is said that such and such things are certain, or certain in themselves, we mean, certain to us, to our thought, whether the things are free or not free. If we know them clearly and distinctly, we have certainty. It is a solecism to use certainty in an objective causal sense, for it is always logical and subjective, equivalent to knowledge which is clear and distinct. The question therefore is, what is it which God foreknows certainly and infallibly concerning future volitions, determinated by the will-energy; is it free, or is it not free in its choices? Which is the certainty, the fact well-known? It is certain, well-known to God whether the will-energy is determinated by antecedents or is not, but free—the fact is certain *to God's thought*.

(4.) If it is said with Edwards, all certain knowledge, whether it be foreknowledge or after knowledge, or concomitant knowledge, proves the thing known now to be necessary, by some means or other; or proves that it is impossible that it should now be otherwise than true. Now, we grant that all certain knowledge proves the thing known to be necessary; but "necessary" in what sense?

Only in the sense necessary in thought as object known. In knowing it, it is as object-known, necessary for us to think it to be as it is, however it came by its existence. So of the other clause appended by way of explanation, "or proves that it is impossible that it should now be otherwise than true." That is, "*true*" in *thought*, which is something subjective, logical, not objective and causal. To certain knowledge the object is necessary; and relative to the object-known, such knowledge is true, and cannot be otherwise, without a contradiction, saying the knowledge is not knowledge of an object known, or that knowledge of truth is not true.

Edwards in effect says, that since foreknowledge is now necessary, having made sure of existence, other things, our volitions, for instance, indissolubly connected with foreknowledge, are also necessary. This idea is variously wrought out by him, but it is a word-puzzle. In what sense is foreknowledge *necessary*? Only as an extant, immanent reality in God's consciousness. It is logical, subjective, and *necessary* only in the sense that He either foreknows, or does not; and nothing is determined as to what He knows concerning the intrinsic nature of the objective thing known.

Then as to the "indissoluble connection" between foreknowledge and its objects, which is said to render them necessary, what does this mean? That "connection" is purely logical, subjective, immanent in God's thought, and they are "necessary," not in their objective, intrinsic nature and causes, but only "necessary" relative to God's knowing them as objects known. For knowledge and object known are necessarily logical correlates, and that is all; for if there is no object known, there is no knowledge. But this leaves the question untouched, what does God know or foreknow concerning my will-energy as free or not free in its volitions? If these volitions are the free acts of the will-energy as a free cause, exempt from any antecedent causal determination, then if God knows or foreknows them at all, it is that they are, what they are, the free acts of a free energy. If any one says, then in that case, as free they may possibly be different from His knowledge or foreknowledge of them. Well, if so, that would only show that He did not know what would be, and that He had not certain infallible foreknowledge of what would be.

(5.) Should any one now say, *How* can God foreknow the free acts of the will-energy as an undetermined free cause, for what *evidence*

can He have in the case supposed as the ground of His infallible foreknowledge? I reply, What do you mean by *evidence*? If it is simply meant, what are the conditions in which the will-energy determinates its action? Then I point to the existence of the man himself as the creature of God, conditioned and limited in many directions by mental and physical causes, so that the possibilities of free volitions are by manifold causes limited to a certain sphere of one or more alternatives. If this is what is meant by evidence, then it only amounts to saying that God's foreknowledge is perfect, and not only embraces the free volitions, but also all the antecedents and concomitants as conditions of the will-energy when it determinates its actions on its objects, as either for or against them, originating new sequences in the reticulated series of things. God's knowledge comprehends perfectly and at once all things and acts in their nature and interrelations, not from the one set of things bearing witness to another, but from the perfection of His omniscience.

But if by *evidence* is meant "*media*" of knowledge, then such evidence is inconsistent with the perfection of Divine knowledge. For, if God's foreknowledge is mediate knowledge,

then it is a final conclusion from gathered, sifted reports of credible witnesses giving information according to our human analogies of passing from ignorance and doubt to knowledge and certainty. But such necessity of media, and such mediate foreknowledge drawn from a gathered experience of credible evidence is a denial of God's omniscience, and robs God of His infinitely perfect knowledge, by reducing it to the limits and conditions of our human methods of obtaining information that we may pass from ignorance to knowledge. To speak of evidence to God as a stepping-stone across the gulf of ignorance to knowledge, is an impeachment of God's infinite perfection of knowledge.

But without media or evidence, if it is now asked, *how* can God know, or infallibly foreknow a free act which from its very nature may or may not be? I am not bound to answer that question, and tell *How*. Can you, who question me, tell me how God knows all that is possible from everlasting to everlasting; how He knows all that has become facts, things done in the eternal past, and all that is being done in the time present? When you give me the *how* of that knowledge, I will most likely be able to give you the *how* of foreknowledge of all the possible, and all the facts,

things to be done in the eternal future. For you are really asking for the limits and conditions and methods of the unlimited, unconditioned, eternal realities of the infinite God's omniscience.

Or do you join with those who base God's foreknowledge of future volitions on God's decrees, and say that He cannot foreknow them unless He first of all foreordains them, and that His decrees are the media which *enable* Him to foresee all things which shall come to pass in the future. This is what Necessitarian theologians in general affirm. Let it be granted; what then? They project a human analogy upon the Divine mind—an analogy, however, of impotence. Because a man is able to know beforehand what he will do, when he has purposed and determined it; so God after the manner of a man knows what will be, because He has decreed it, and will Himself as first cause execute it in and through second causes. But this is to measure the immensities of Divine thought by the limits and imperfections of the human. Moreover, in the case supposed, there is no foreknowledge in God at all of what I shall do. God's foreknowledge is simply His eternal present knowledge of His eternal immutable decrees finally executed by

Himself in my volitions. Thus the mystery of foreknowledge is got rid of by its utter denial, and reducing it to God's knowledge of His own decrees.

How can He certainly, infallibly foreknow the volitions determinated by the will-energy as itself free to choose or not, act or not? Yes, how! Will you Calvinian Divines say, He cannot, and set limits to Him whose understanding is infinite? In the presence of the mysteries of Divine prescience, I for one rest in the infinite adequacy of the infinite mind to know all the knowable and the possible absolutely; and further, to know whatever has been done, is being done, or will yet be done, whether by causes determinated and necessary, or by causes undeterminated and free.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### FREEDOM OF WILL AND THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

**THEOLOGICAL** Necessitarians maintain that the influences of the Holy Spirit are not only essentially requisite in conversion, regeneration, and

sanctification, but also, that these influences are in their nature invincible, irresistible, necessitating. It is consequently held by them, that whenever it pleases the Spirit of God to exert His specific power or influence on the soul of man, conversion, regeneration, and some degree of sanctification are necessary results from the necessitating cause in the Spirit's operations. The necessitating influences of the Holy Spirit are of course declared to be consistent with human freedom on the grounds already considered. These operations, it is said, do not consist of any extrinsic coercion or compulsion forcing the man to be or do anything against his will, or without a will, for that would indeed be destructive of all freedom. Nor do these operations of the Divine Spirit, it is said, consist in any intrinsic necessitation of choice and moral disposition by any blind, brutish impulse, without or apart from the previous judgment of the practical intellect, and spontaneity. That is, the Spirit invincibly, irresistibly necessitates the will to be willingly willing, and to have no contrary will. Therefore there is no force compelling a man against his will, for the Spirit in the most subtle mysterious manner irresistibly, necessarily determinates the will



to be of its own accord willing. From this necessitation of the will in fact with freedom in appearance, there follows as a corollary that these saving influences of the Spirit are limited to the elect, or those finally saved. The fact that a man is unchanged, unsaved, declares the fact that the Spirit has not exerted the influences adapted to convert the soul. The arguments urged from Scripture in support of this theory of Divine influence in the salvation of men do not concern us at present. Most assuredly the correct exposition of Holy Scripture and a true interpretation of the human consciousness will be found in perfect accordance, like double stars, or rather suns giving reflexive and united light. But this theory, with its necessitation in fact along with its freedom in appearance, limited in fact to some and responsibility of all for salvation, we regard as contradicted by the veracities of human consciousness and the consensus of human moral judgments, already set forth. The theory and its expositions of Scripture in its defence are contradictory of the facts of consciousness, and, therefore, the one or the other is incredible.

But now, on the other hand, in perfect consistency with our theory of the will-energy's

freedom, we affirm that the Holy Spirit's influences, fitted and adapted to convince, convert, regenerate, sanctify the soul, are in their nature resistible, and in fact resisted by men in the moral sphere of things; and that these influences are not limited to the elect alone, but are graciously extended to all men responsible for their final destiny as saved or unsaved. To some of the objections which may be urged against this statement of our theory in its application to the work of the Holy Spirit we offer the following answers,—

(1.) It may be said that on the theory of freedom advocated by us, the Spirit is not the sole author of the saving changes and habits denoted by such terms as repentance, faith, conversion, regeneration, sanctification, and perseverance unto the end. Certainly not. As moral and spiritual changes or habits containing moral character and moral relations, man has something to do, and is a co-worker with the Spirit. The Spirit and man are joint factors in the Divine and human harmonic synergism, co-operating to produce one effect or end. If there is grace and gracious working on the part of the Divine Spirit, there is also duty and responsibility on the

part of man. Deny this, or explain it away by irrelevancies about man being made willingly willing—*i.e.*, necessitated to will thus and not otherwise, because to will otherwise is impossible, and you render man passive, and absolutely determinated in every element of consciousness. As passively determinated in fact, the Spirit alone, and not the man, is responsible. If here it is said, But the man can pray for the Spirit to do the work alone, and dispose him in some way to receive and yield to Divine influence. Very well; but if so, that grants the whole question, the man is so far active and free. In such a case there is doing, co-operating by man as a real factor in a composite result, and that is all for which I contend in point of principle when asserting human freedom and responsibility in moral and spiritual changes, and habits, and destinies.

(2.) If it is said, Granting that man is active in these changes and habits, and in freedom contributes something as from himself, then man has some merit, is praiseworthy, and the Spirit of God has not all the praise and glory. Suppose it so, where is the harm, or what is the error? In his spiritual changes and habits, the man himself either does right

or does wrong, or does nothing moral at all. If he does something right, however little, in the honesties of the moral universe, he is worthy, or merits or deserves approval, or praise, or honour so far. Conversely, if he does wrong, however little, in like manner, and for the same eternal reasons, he deserves blame so far. If he does nothing moral at all, is only a passive recipient of a work done in him or on him by another, then he has no moral character in it, and has no more responsibility in it than if it had been another man who was converted. Therefore, if there is moral character in the man relative to spiritual changes and habits, he does and ought to do something, and at least merits praise,—a “well done” from God and man. Of course, he on the contrary receives something from the Spirit of unspeakable value for which he owes eternal thankfulness. In the very complex and composite spiritual changes and habits of saved men, the man and the Spirit of God are always synergistic factors; but relatively to each other, the Spirit is first at once in importance and in order, the man is second and freely responsive.

(3.) But how can the Spirit of God influence man as endowed with a free will-energy? In

speaking of Divine operations, there is something formidable in that "*how*"—for an infinite worker sooner or later passes beyond the limits and measures and methods of our human "*how*." Still speaking within our limits, and generally, we may say that God's Spirit may influence man in whatever manner or method He pleases, up to the limits of not necessitating his will-energy. It is a commonplace to say that on that side of our nature which is receptive of influence from what is not-self, we are determinated, necessitated. Our thoughts and emotive-energies are causally determinated or necessitated by the external world, men, and God himself. These energies as determinated lie open to the universe, and its myriad influences, material and spiritual, incessantly stream in upon us, and condition us with the objects, ends, and aims of conduct. For these forces and influences must enter into us, and announce themselves in thought and feeling, in order that we may determinate our action upon them, and so determinate some change in them or their relations to us. Thus we are conditioned by all that is in the universe of the not-self, and furnished with the possibilities of personal action. But when all the conditions requisite

to a given action are present, we are still free to act for or against them—choose or not choose them.

Accordingly the Spirit of God, as He sees good, may enter into and present Himself, His truth and love to the thoughts and emotive-energies, conditioning our will-energy by objects, aims, ends, &c., thereby rendering it imperatively obligatory on us to will and to do, yea or nay, to choose or to refuse. But in so doing, He does not necessitate or irresistibly cause the will to will willingly. He conditions it by the objects of choice in thought and feeling, and presents the alternatives of obedience or disobedience, which can be determinated into facts only by the will-energy itself. Hence, human responsibility for the final decision is clearly seen.

Within the limits of not necessitating the will-energy to a unit of the possible, God's Spirit, we devoutly believe and teach, works manifoldly within and around us. Through His general providence in our surroundings, by physiological and psychological conditions requisite to clear thought and vivid emotions, and facility of fixed attention, by giving readiness in memory and suggestion, and, in one word, by powerful impressions on the mind of the reality and glory of things spiritual and

eternal, the Holy Spirit in these or other ways may condition our will-energy with great fervencies in thought and urgencies of feeling; so that man in his freedom will have a severe struggle in resisting and in doing despite to the Spirit of grace. Still in the moral sphere that is possible, and alas, is the awful fact in the case of the impenitent.

We therefore earnestly contend for the necessity and reality of the Holy Spirit's grace and influences, prevenient and concomitant, in order to furnish the possibilities and means to ends in conversion and all other moral or spiritual changes and habits of the soul. The Necessitarian theory consistently carried out renders the human soul a spiritual automaton, badly constructed, indeed, and working with a great deal of friction in the hands of the Spirit of God, who determinates its spiritual movements. Whereas, on our theory we can account consistently for the personal operations of the Holy Spirit in harmony with the freedom and responsibility of man according to the testimony of the Scriptures. Apart from the personal operations of the Spirit of God, either by His great instrument of the Word of the truth, or by immediate influences in the physiological and psychological spheres, man's freedom of will

would be unconditioned, having nothing on which to determinate its choices. It is the function of the Holy Spirit in the economy of redemption to condition man's free will-energy by God's agency, thoughts, loves, and will, and thus render it not only possible, but imperative and dutiful for man to choose God's thoughts, loves, and will as his own in faith, in love, and in action. We are thus enabled clearly to see that Divine influence and grace so abundantly bestowed, and human freedom, instead of excluding or neutralising each other, are in reality the joint factors of a very complex result, in which God has the glory which is due to Him, and man retains the dignity and freedom of his manhood, and is still the free responsible subject of moral government with its moral imperatives and awards.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### FREEDOM OF WILL AND NATURAL AND MORAL ABILITY AS A BASIS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

No science of man can be complete without some reference to responsibility as implied in all human ethics. There are those customs which are regulative in human life, and which



are at least supposed to be obligatory, and to have the sanction of praise and blame, reward and punishment. These customs are commonly regarded as valid not only for my life and your life, but also for the confederated life-units forming what is called society. Necessitarians, scientific and theological, have accordingly to give some account of human ethics as embodied in personal character, and in social, civil, and moral governments.

Scientists, when dealing with the phenomena of human life, in some form acknowledge an ethic and its implicates, obligations, responsibility, rewards and punishments. But according to their canons of physical science, man is responsible only in the sense that he is *responsive*, in terms of his nature must be responsive, to the causes or stimuli in his environments upon his organism. As thus determinated by these stimuli, the organism or the man discharges its, or his, energies in useful or injurious forms, and is accordingly praised or blamed by the collective organisms called society. Man is thus responsible only as he is responsive to the determinating stimuli of his surroundings, and is good or bad only as he is useful or hurtful.

But in reference to this interpretation of man and his ethics, it is plain that man differs

nothing from any other agent, inorganic or organic, when affected by the proper stimulus. The only difference between man and a chemical agent is, that the stimuli of society enter into man by knowledge, and become a factor in his conduct. The known approval or disapproval constrains or restrains as the case may be. If he does not respond properly to this influence of society, and is in fact proved to be resistant to social ethics, and so acts contrary to the consensus of what is good and useful, bad and injurious, he may be caged or destroyed like other noxious organisms. Personal merit or demerit, virtue or vice, sin or holiness in the ethical or religious sense, are non-existent in man. He is only useful or injurious in common with other agents in their respective manners. Rewards and punishments, so called, are simply declarations that society esteems certain actions useful or injurious. The only responsibility of man consists in his being responsive to this social judgment, acting according to it—it may be a society of banditti with its ethics, or of scientists, or of fanatics. But there is no personal responsibility, virtue or vice, holiness or crime, as moralists and theologians affirm.

The freedom of the will-energy already set forth, and the imperatives of conscience about

to be mentioned, we regard as overturning this mechanical ethic of the scientist.

It is, however, far otherwise with theological Necessitarians. Inconsistently with their theory, as we think, they strongly hold and teach that man is responsible, and that in his conduct there is virtue or vice, sin or holiness, merit or demerit. So also in their own lives these theologians have given the highest and most noble exemplifications of moral and spiritual attainments. Still, their theory of the will we regard as destructive of morals and human responsibility before God and universal conscience.

Compelled by an intellectual necessity they seek for a basis of responsibility and moral agency. According to the Edwardian school this basis is found in the distinction between natural and moral ability, or rather inability. Natural inability, they say, excuses or exempts from all responsibility, but moral inability does not. Let us look for a moment at this.

By natural ability is meant the power which a man has to do as he wills or chooses. He is able to do a thing when he wills it, and nothing external to his will hinders or prevents his doing it. On the other hand, he is naturally unable to do a thing when he cannot do it when he wills or chooses, that

is, what we call nature does not allow it. Some hindrance or defect is found in the mind, body, or external world. This natural inability wholly excuses and exempts from responsibility. To which we at once assent.

It is only necessary to remark, first, that this ability and inability exclude the vital point "*as he wills or chooses*," and how he comes to will or choose as he does; and, secondly, both the ability and inability cover the same sphere as was formerly described as that of freedom or liberty—that is, the sphere of "*doing*" extrinsic and posterior to the will and its choice. Both the ability and inability refer to actions and sequents of choice, and not to choice itself, the first decisive step in the series. It is just as if you said that a watch is responsible for going when nothing external to it hinders or prevents the wound up main-spring from doing according as it now pulls, and is exempt from responsibility when it is unable to do as it now pulls. But what of this "*pulls*" in the watch, and what of this "*as he wills or chooses*" in the man?

By moral ability, it is confessed, is not meant an ability properly so-called, but only the prevailing dispositions, inclinations, inducements, or strongest motives as moral causes determinating the volitions of the will

to be as they are, and not otherwise. Thus moral ability simply amounts to a capacity of being determinated to choose by moral causes as distinguished from physical causes. These moral causes, or strongest motives in this so-called moral ability, necessitate, or necessarily determinate the man in every volition in its order, so that it is impossible for it to be otherwise.

Moral inability denotes either the want of inclinations or the strength of a contrary inclination. It "consists in the opposition or want of inclination" to a given choice or action. It is impossible for the man to have that choice, or perform that action, when he had no inclination, or had a contrary one, for it would be a contradiction, and be equal to saying that he chose what he did not choose. Relative to this, it is needful only to remark, first, that this is the old sophism of the prevailing inclinations and strongest motives as moral causes determinating the will and its choices; and, secondly, that the moral ability is only the natural capacity of mind in which inclinations or strongest motives as moral causes determinate volitions to be what they are, and not otherwise; and, thirdly, that moral inability is simply the *natural* incapacity of the mind to have a volition without a moral

cause, or a volition contrary to such moral cause.

This *moral* ability and inability so-called, turn out, after all, on close inspection, to be a pure, simple *natural* ability and inability. If, therefore, as it is admitted, that natural inability exempts from all responsibility, so also must moral inability, as consisting in no cause, or a contrary one. For each species of inability generically consists in the non-existence of an adequate cause for the required effect, natural or moral. Surely responsibility cannot rest on the basis of an impossibility involved in a moral, and in reality a natural inability, to have a volition as an effect without a cause, or in spite of a contrary stronger cause. Yet it is asserted that moral inability does not excuse or exempt from responsibility, yea, on the contrary, it is in this very moral inability that the essence of man's crime is found. It is strongly maintained that man is criminal just because he has no inclination, or a contrary one, to the doing of his duty. There is nothing wanting but the will, and for that want of will he is criminal in the common judgments of mankind, and according to the law of God. This we at once grant. But why? Instead of moral inability to will otherwise, from the want of inclination, or an oppo-

site one, as the theory affirms, our consciousness declares the fact, which the theory denies, that every moral agent is able and free to will, choose, and do his duty as set before him and known, either with or against his inclinations, whether the most agreeable or most disagreeable. For these so-called "moral causes," or strongest motives, or what is most agreeable, &c., are not the causes of volitions or choices, but are, relative to the will, only the reasons, ends, aims, or objects on which the free will-energy determinates its choices and actions, and the relations which they shall sustain to it, and it to them. Therefore, in this conscious freedom, we are directly conscious of our responsibility to will, and to do our duty, inclinations, disinclinations, the most agreeable or disagreeable notwithstanding. When, therefore, Necessitarians say you are responsible for doing a thing when you can do it if you will, and there is nothing wanting but the will, the consent of every man is at once given, because, conscious of his freedom, he at once supplies the fact suppressed, yea denied by the theory that he knows *he is able to will, choose, and do his duty*. Thus, the only basis for responsibility Necessitarians of this school get, is by a logical trick. They surreptitiously steal our consent to responsibility

from our consciousness of freedom in choice; but concealing, yea, expressly denying, possession or knowledge of the stolen goods, they boldly declare to us, you are not free to will or choose to do your duty, but are necessitated to choose as you do by moral causes. Morally unable to choose otherwise in any case, and yet you know you are responsible. Strange as it may appear, the only basis which the Necessitarian theory has for human responsibility is, moral inability to will or choose otherwise than as we do necessarily determined by moral causes, and natural ability to do as we choose. But we have already shown that this moral inability is in principle the same as natural inability, for both consist in the absolute impossibility of an effect without an adequate cause to produce it. Man cannot take the first step—choice, for he is morally unable; and what is the use of telling him that he is free, and nothing hinders him taking the second step if he once gets the first. He cannot get the first. His whole responsibility, according to the theory, rests on an insuperable inability, impossibility.

Some theological Necessitarians very justly, as we think, call in question this distinction between natural and moral inability as a basis for responsibility. They regard man's inability



to will, and to do what is morally and spiritually good, as natural. This natural inability in things moral and spiritual is, however, said not to excuse or exempt from responsibility. They trace this inability to the effects of Adam's fall on the race, involving the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of the whole nature of man, disabling him, and rendering him opposed to all that is spiritually good, and prone to all that is evil. These results, while making man unable to do his duty, are the penalties of sin, and as such do not exempt from responsibility. This is not the place to discuss the theories regarding original sin and its effects on the race. It is enough for us to observe that this form of the Necessitarian theory bases human responsibility upon a natural and total inability to will and choose and do our duty as the penalty or consequence of a sin we did not commit. Assuredly, such a theory must be false, for, according to it, responsibility for the whole of human duty rests with one foot on our natural inability to do a single item of it properly, and with the other foot rests on the penalty of another man's sin. Natural inability inflicted as penalty for sin not our own, is surely a strange foundation for personal responsibility. The honesties of human

consciousness and conscience reject all such ideas as incredible and absurd. Great and manifold as are the evils from the fall of Adam to his posterity, the basis of responsibility remains in every man's power to choose and do his duty.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### FREEDOM OF WILL AND MORAL AGENCY AS THE BASIS OF RESPONSIBILITY.

WHAT then is the proper basis for human responsibility? It is the freedom of the will-energy in determinating its choices and actions conditioned by conscience. A moral agent is therefore an agent possessing a free will and a conscience.

*First*, then, freedom of will is essential to a moral agent and agency, as distinguished from all other agents and agencies. Whatever is viewed as a cause producing its proper effects is an agent, an actor, or doer. Thus oxygen is an agent in a multitude of cases; water is an agent in carrying materials from the hills, depositing them in valleys or ocean beds. As agents, however, they are not free, but necessarily determinated in every action, and

are therefore not moral agents. A stone detached from the cliff falling upon a man and killing him is an agent, but not a free, and not a moral agent. A beast, say a bull infuriated, goring a man and killing him, is an agent, but is determinated by its irrational impulse, or strongest motives, and is not free, not a moral agent. But let a man in a fit of passionate impulse, and very irrationally, or even worse, by the strongest motive arising out of a previous judgment of the practical understanding as most agreeable, and with deliberate purpose, kill another man, he is held to be a responsible agent or actor. Why? The effect in each case is the same, and why is the man's action different from the action of the stone and of the bull? Why is he held to be responsible while they are not? Let Necessitarians of all schools fairly face that question, for on their principles the stone, the bull, and the man as the agents, each causing a man's death, are alike determinated to act as they do by antecedent necessitating causes. Why, therefore, blame the man as criminal, and only regret the others as misfortunes or calamities? The only reason, a reason, however, absolutely denied by the theory we oppose, is that man is not merely an agent, but a moral agent, possessing freedom

of will to choose and to do or not, conditioned by conscience. Deny that, and you reduce man's agency to the level of the agency of a stone or a passion-driven beast. That man as an agent possesses freedom of will-energy to choose and to do, we have already shown.

But, secondly, conscience is essential to moral agency, or to man as a moral agent responsible for his actions. As a free agent determinating his own choices and actions, man requires some rule or law according to which he *ought* to act or choose. His free agency must not be placed, as it were, in a vacuum, where nothing is known, nothing felt, for then there would be nothing to be done, no possibility of any moral action at all. But this law or rule according to which man, as a free agent, ought to conduct himself and exert his causal energy is morally imperative, or obligatory only, and not causally necessitating, annihilating freedom of action. The moral law which conditions moral agency contains not a causal necessity of "must be," but simply the moral imperative of "ought to be." In possession of freedom of will-energy, conditioned by conscience with its moral imperative, man is a moral agent capable of doing or not doing his duty to himself, to his fellow-men, and to his God.

Conscience is that mental power by which we at once apprehend moral law and feel its obligations, and specially realise its sanctions in pain or pleasures. Respecting conscience I will make the following brief remarks :—

(1.) Conscience gives us the idea or notion of right or wrong as eternal contradictories. These ideas are evolved in every sound mind, and do not come as an importation from without, but grow up spontaneously within. There may be difficulties in applying the notions of right and wrong to particular cases, and determining which is right and which is wrong; but amid these uncertainties as to the particular cases, the notions of right and wrong are there in the mind as standards by which all human actions, manners, and customs are to be tested, and finally be declared to be virtuous or vicious, dutiful or the contrary.

(2.) The idea of right and wrong is simple and ultimate, like the idea of the true and the false. We can only point out the conditions in which the idea emerges, and the materials with which it is concerned. These conditions are, first of all, the general apprehension or knowledge of the intelligence concerning what now exists in the nature and constitution and present state of things, as a fixed quantity and quality. In this extant *Being* in the

universe, God himself, with His self-existent perfections, must be included. We have a fixed term, so to speak, in this extant Being—the *Is* of things. Then, secondly, there is in us conscious freedom of will-energy, as cause able to do, or not to do, to act or not to act, and so produce or effect some change in what now *is*. The question now comes, which acts, or doings, or changes effected, ought to be or ought not to be, are right or wrong, relative to what already exists? Thus right or wrong, or the “*ought*” or “*ought not*” in morals, denotes the relation of *doing* to *being*. *Doing* may have a threefold relation to *being*: either, (a.) The relation of perfect agreement, and in that case it is right, straight on the same lines with what is, and is what ought to be—what is measures what “ought to be;” or, (b.) The doing may have the relation of disagreement, and in that case it is *wrong*, and what ought not to be, and what *is* measures what “ought not to be done;” or, (c.) The doing may have the relation of leaving what is as it is, and in that case the doing is simply indifferent, and neither “*ought*” nor “*ought not*” can be affirmed of it. The notion of right and wrong, of what ought to be or ought not to be, is the intuitive dis-

cernment of the agreement or non-agreement of things done by the will-energy with things affirmed by the intelligence as now existing in the nature and constitution of things, and in the nature of God himself. The notions of right and wrong lie on the same plane with the notions of true and false. The right act affirms, by a thing done, a true proposition. The wrong act denies, by a thing done, a true proposition, or affirms a false one.

From what has just been said, there are the following corollaries worthy of notice:—

(1.) That conscience is not a separate, unique faculty, as many suppose, but in the sphere of moral ideas and judgments is identical with the intelligence, and, therefore, denotes the rational faculty, judicially determining the agreement or non-agreement of the things which are done with the things which already are.

(2.) That the *imperative* which is found in our moral judgments is of the same order and validity as the *necessity* which is found in our purely intellectual or logical judgments. Both are, in reality, the imperative or necessity of thought contained in the law of non-contradiction. When the subject of a proposition is some being, as it is in nature and

the constitution of things, and the predicate is something done, some action of a free agent, then there is an imperative or a necessity of thought to think that the thing done or action agrees with, or does not agree with—i.e., affirms or contradicts the being contained in the subject, taken as the fixed term of the proposition. The imperative contained in a moral judgment is, therefore, the imperative necessity expressed in the logical law of non-contradiction in the terms of true propositions. All arguments against the intrinsic validity of moral judgments and their imperative force must, in principle, overturn the validity of all logical intellectual judgments, and leave nothing but universal self-suicidal doubt.

(3.) It also follows from what we have already said, that the ultimate standard of right and wrong is not the will of God. The acts of the Divine will in themselves require to be judged, and their moral character ascertained by some fixed term above them and antecedent to them, with which they are as acts in agreement or not. This fixed term in this moral judgment of acts of the Divine will must be found in the self-existent nature and perfections of God's being, which we, at all events, must conceive of as antecedent to and



independent of all acts of the Divine will. "*He is*" is the fixed term by which "*He wills*" must be judged, and the agreement or non-agreement of "*He wills*" with "*He is*" be ascertained and determined. With all Theists we of course assume the self-existence and self-existent natural perfections of God. We assume that He is omniscient, and knows all He is; and relatively to what He is, knows with infallible wisdom what He ought to will and to do, to affirm, and never contradict His being and natural perfections. God's infinitely perfect being, as known in His omniscience and wisdom (which wisdom is only His omniscience applied to things done), is the ultimate eternal standard of right and wrong for Himself and His moral creatures. Actions, whether in God or moral creatures, are not right because God wills them or commands them, but He wills and commands them because they are right, relative to the eternal standard which is in Himself. For all moral and practical purposes, it is doubtless enough for us to know what God's will is; for whether we may be able to understand it or not, that will, when expressed in the nature and constitution of creatures, or in commandments, is the vesture, the signature of the Divine per-

fections, and to us the infallible standard of right and wrong.

2. Conscience gives us not only the imperative notion, idea, or judgment of right and wrong, it also involves a feeling of obligation to do that which is right, and never to do that which is wrong. The imperative found in the moral judgment passes over into an imperative or feeling of obligation in the emotive-energy to do the right and not to do the wrong. This emotional obligation, or "*ought*" as felt, rests on two conditions: First, the notion, idea, or moral judgment, with its imperative in thought; and, secondly, consciousness of free will-energy to choose and to do the right, or the "*ought*," in the case as it is at present. When these conditions are present, when the moral judgment of what is right blends with the concurrent consciousness of power to choose and to do it, the emotional obligation emerges, and nothing less than the annihilation of the notion of right and the consciousness of power to do it, can destroy the urgency of feeling that we ought to do it. This is the emotional impulse or motive to perform our duty.

3. Conscience involves in its operations emotional pleasures and pains of a unique

kind. Pleasures and pains are generic, and arise in presence of all objects as they are considered to be good or evil, useful or injurious. But when objects are viewed as right or wrong, morally good or evil, specific pleasures or pains are excited in the emotional nature. To these we apply the specific terms, "moral approbation and disapprobation." When we have done what is right, and what we ought to have done, there is a complacency towards ourselves, a sense of worth and worthiness in the presence of others, giving us a very serene satisfaction. But when we do what is contrary to the right, the dutiful, we are self-condemned, and feel unworthy of ourselves and the esteem of others. The feeling of moral approbation may vary from a momentary gleam of pleasure to a delight elevated and permanent, and the feeling of moral disapprobation varies from the slightest censure to the strongest horrors of remorse.

In reference to others, our feelings of moral approbation and disapprobation manifest themselves in delight and admiration of them when they do what is right, and abhorrence, wrath, and indignation when they have done what is wrong. In these feelings towards self and others, we have incipient moral destinies of

weal or woe as the outgrowth of moral character, resulting from free will-energy conditioned by conscience. Still further, these incipient destinies are the prediction, as they are also the basis, of future final weal or woe, as the implicates of free will conditioned by conscience and God's moral government.

It will be observed that we have spoken of conscience, for convenience sake, as if it were a unit, a distinct faculty, irresolvable into others. But it is only as a matter of verbal convenience as denoting a certain group of mental phenomena—viz., the phenomena of moral action. If, however, we use conscience in common speech as denoting a mental faculty, it is not simple, but complex, consisting of an element of the intelligence and an element of the emotional energy. We do not require a distinct faculty to account for our moral ideas and judgments and emotions; conscience, therefore, simply denotes that the intellectual and emotive energies are being exercised on matters relating to the morals or the actions of free agents.

4. As now explained, conscience conditions the free will-energy :—(1.) As a judge, investigating, ascertaining what is or is not the state of the case, and determining judicially

what is right and what is wrong ; (2.) as a law containing an imperative in thought and feeling, whose formula ever is, "Thou shalt," or "Thou shalt not;" (3.) as a motive in the emotions, with its benedictions on the right, and its maledictions on the wrong. Thus conscience, with its moral imperative in thought and emotion, conditions the free will-energy with the objects, ends, aims, on which it determines its action, either for or against them. In the free will-energy conditioned by conscience, we accordingly find the broad and firm foundation for man's responsibility for what he does relative to himself and others, and above all to God himself.

THE END.









